

Reader's digest

SEPTEMBER 2015

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FROM *MENTAL FLOSS*



PHOTOGRAPH BY GABRIELLE REVERE

WARDROBE STYLIST: MARIE BLOMQUIST;

HAIRSTYLIST: NATE ROSENKRANZ;

MAKEUP STYLIST: SUZY GERSTEIN;

MODEL: COURTNEY MCCANN/WILHELMINA;

CORSET LEOTARD BY LIVETHEPROCESS.COM



Editor's Note

The Family in the Van



THE 180-MILE DRIVE from home to the University of Michigan was the most difficult journey of my life. I remember our Chevy van stuffed with pillows, comforters, and bags of hair products from Bernie Shulman's. And I can still feel the knot of despair (leaving the boyfriend!) and doubt (could I cut it academically?) that twisted in my stomach. We were quiet as my dad drove along I-80, stealing tentative smiles in the rearview mirror while Mom underlined interesting classes for me to consider in the well-thumbed course guide.

I think of the vans pulling out of driveways this August, and I know the pride, hope, and even uncertainty that fill them.

In his essay "Unprepared," Rob Lowe draws a beautiful picture of his family as they pack and take their older son to school. I love this piece because the Lowes' plane trip took me back to my own anguished van ride, and I could appreciate the different ways my parents treated the transition. Mom sent me off with a hearty hug and a huge smile, certain I had all the traits and toiletries I needed. Dad misted up, then mailed me a letter every other day that first semester.

I didn't know it when my family's van pulled away from South Quad and left me to the next chapter of my life, but thanks to everything they'd done in raising me and getting me to this milestone, I was indeed prepared. **R**



I invite you to e-mail me at liz@rd.com and follow me at facebook.com/lizvaccariello and [lizvaccariello](https://instagram.com/lizvaccariello) on Instagram.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE VACCARIELLO; WARDROBE STYLIST: ELYSHA TENKIN; HAIR AND MAKEUP: KIM KEMWITZ FOR PRO-STYLE-CREW; JEWELRY: WIMBERLY INC.



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Letters

COMMENTS ON THE JUNE ISSUE



50 Secrets Food Manufacturers Won't Tell You

While we may spend a relatively small portion of our disposable income on food, we pay dearly in other ways. I would not mind paying a little more at the grocery store in exchange for federal policies that ensured healthier people, ecosystems, and communities.

JANICE F. DYER, *Madison, Alabama*

Too much information!

TERRI L. HORNE, *Shallotte, North Carolina*

When I was growing up, we had food growers and food preparers; nowhere do I recall the phrase *food manufacturer*. We would all be healthier if more food was purchased directly from growers and prepared at home.

RICHARD POTENSKI, *Woodland, Washington*

What information do you have to support number 48, which says farmed fish have more omega-3s than wild salmon? We make a living by fishing wild salmon, which we firmly believe is healthier than farmed salmon.

NANCY E. JONES, *Kodiak, Alaska*

EDITOR'S NOTE: According to the USDA's *National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference*, Atlantic farmed salmon has 1,800 mg of omega-3 fatty acids per three-ounce cooked portion versus 1,700 mg for wild king salmon, 900 mg for wild coho salmon, and 800 mg for wild sockeye salmon.

Not Without My Neighbors

This is what is missing in our country! Community and the willingness to help a neighbor who is in a bad situation.

ANNE HUSTED, *Paris, Kentucky*

The World Is Not Falling Apart

The world may not be falling apart because of war, but it is being consumed and covered in garbage by seven billion inhabitants. **A. H., via e-mail**

"Bee stings and other accidents kill more Americans than terrorists do." Bees don't hijack aircraft and fly them into buildings. Traffic accidents don't cut the heads off innocents. Nonetheless, we prepare to mitigate bee stings; we spend millions making cars safer. These are unavoidable risks of life in this country. Unless we're ready to accept death by terrorism as an unavoidable risk of life, it should receive the same attention to avoidance and public safety as bee stings and traffic accidents. **DAVID COX, Palmer, Alaska**

It's refreshing to read an expert opinion that presents a more positive spin on this topic. **B. F., via e-mail**

Your Winning Poems

*Now I know that picking four out of all the entries was a task,
But couldn't one of the winners have had some rhyming? I'd like to ask.*

RAY SPECK, Glendale, Arizona

Big Shoes to Fill

Theresa Arnold's 100-word true story brought tears to my eyes. My dad always wore cowboy boots and put many miles on them. When he passed away, I took those old, worn boots and put them on his grave, where they remain to this day.

CONNIE SUKUP, Wayne, Nebraska

A Simple Thank-You

As I sit on a school bus and wait for a softball game to end, I spend my time reading *Reader's Digest*. I enjoy the words of wisdom and the laughter.

I was a substitute bus driver on a route a few years ago. As the elementary schoolers boarded, each took a step back to look at the bus number again. All had the same question in their minds: "Does he know where I live?" I was nearing the end of my run and had one kindergartner left. I stopped outside his house and opened the doors. Before I could say, "Wait for my signal," he put a dime in my hand and said, "Thank you for getting me home." We weren't lost or late; he was just thankful. That dime sits next to my watch to remind me how important my job is. Here's a dime, RD; thank you for listening.

TOM BARTZ, Alexander, New York

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EVERYDAY HEROES



A shark out for blood is no match for
cowboy surfer Brian Wargo

Saved from the Jaws of a Shark

BY KATIE ASKEW

 THE BRIGHT MORNING sun glistened off four- and five-foot waves as old friends McKenzie Clark and Brian Wargo slid their surfboards into the warm water and paddled out to sea. It was Halloween 2014, in Hawaii's Keawaeli Bay.

About 400 yards from shore, McKenzie's board hit what she thought was a rock. When she looked down, instead she saw the outline of a shark easily 12 feet long. She screamed as she felt the board rise, the shark's body breaching

the surface. "I was perched on its head and getting pulled out to sea," says McKenzie, 35.

From where he sat on his board about 20 feet away, Brian, 45, saw the tiger shark. As an avid outdoorsman, he knew the species was aggressive and paddled frantically toward his friend.

Before Brian reached McKenzie, the shark slipped beneath the water, leaving her crouched on the surfboard, gripping its side with her left hand. Seconds later, the shark ➡



*Brian Wargo, 45,
with McKenzie
Clark's shark-
bitten surfboard*

rocketed to the surface and bit into the surfboard, pinning McKenzie's hand to the board. As she jerked it free, the momentum caused her to topple backward into the water, still tethered to the board by her ankle leash. The shark took off again toward open water, the surfboard still in its mouth.

Brian watched helplessly as McKenzie flew up and down in the water. Then the shark released the board, and Brian paddled toward his friend.

Blood gushed from her left hand as McKenzie desperately fumbled to remove the leash from her ankle. In the distance, Brian saw the shark's dorsal fin reverse course. "He's coming back," Brian yelled to McKenzie. "Get on your board!"

On its way in McKenzie's direction, the shark swam underneath Brian's board, and when the shark's dorsal fin appeared above water, Brian grabbed it. With his left hand holding onto the fin, Brian punched the shark in the gills with his right fist several times. On the fifth punch, "the shark shuddered," Brian says,

and swam back out toward open water.

"Are you OK?" Brian called out.

"He bit my fingers off!" McKenzie responded from atop her surfboard, which now bore three sets of teeth marks.

Two other surfers heard the yelling from about 100 yards away and swam over to help. They escorted Brian and McKenzie to shore, keeping watch in case the shark returned.

Back on dry land minutes later, the men fashioned a tourniquet out of the top of McKenzie's wet suit to curb the gush of blood from her left hand, and the four of them climbed up a cliff to the parking lot.

Brian drove McKenzie to North Hawaii Community Hospital, about 25 miles away, where doctors removed part of her left ring finger and repaired damage to her hand with about 20 stitches.

McKenzie realizes how lucky she was that her friend was there to help. For his part, Brian says he acted on instinct. "I knew what I had to do to save my friend," he says. **R**

READER'S
HERO

HE LIFTED MY SPIRITS

Bob Trowell helped change my life through his work at Timothy House, a residence home for men struggling with addiction that he founded in 1999. At my lowest point, Pastor Bob, as we call him, asked about my dreams and provided me a support system. Thanks to him, I'm back in college. Bob truly is a superhero. **TAYLOR LEBARON**, *Talking Rock, Georgia*

To nominate your hero, e-mail the details and your name and location to heroes@rd.com.

Thanks to the new house, "I'm on my way to a different life," says Smokie McGhee, with Elvis Summers.

Dream Builder

BY ALYSSA JUNG



ELVIS SUMMERS, 38, met Irene McGhee, 60, last September when she appeared at his Los Angeles apartment building looking for cans and bottles to recycle.

As they chatted, Irene, who is also known as Smokie, revealed that she had been homeless since her husband died about a decade ago. Elvis was moved to help.

"I couldn't ignore human suffering right next to me," he says.

Elvis had read about the tiny-house movement, in which people construct homes measuring 500 square feet or fewer, and believed he had the construction know-how to fashion a similar structure for Smokie.

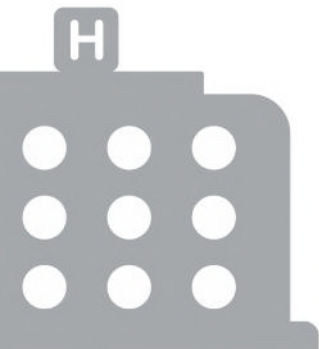
He spent \$500 on building supplies and, in five days, built a 3.5-by-8-foot house, complete with a locking door and side window, at the curb in front of his apartment. The tiny house, which Elvis furnished with a mattress, pillows, and a blanket, sits on wheels so it can

be moved every 72 hours to comply with city law. The finishing touch, a sign reading *Home Sweet Home*, hangs from one of the cedar clapboard walls, donated along with roof shingles by a local business.

On the first night in her new home, Smokie "felt so relaxed, I think I must have slept half the day," she told a local news station.

In April, Elvis posted on YouTube a video of the house as it was being built, racking up six million views in four days. He began fund-raising online to build more tiny houses for the needy, and in a month, he had accrued more than \$80,000.

With the funds he has raised, he's building several more houses, including one for a homeless elderly handicapped man and his dog. Eventually, Elvis wants to hire homeless people to help with construction, and he already has his first employee lined up: Smokie. "I'm ready to start building," she says. **R**



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VOICES & VIEWS

Department of Wit

I Need A Book Club!

BY VICKI GLEMBOCKI

FROM PHILADELPHIA MAGAZINE



VICKI GLEMBOCKI is a columnist for Reader's Digest and a writer at large for Philadelphia magazine.

A YEAR AFTER my husband and I moved to the New Jersey suburbs, where we'd planned to start a family, I realized that in order to be fulfilled, I needed one thing: a book club. It was odd to yearn for one. I'd never been in a book club, although I knew people who made remarks like "When I had a baby, my book club brought dinners for a month!" or "If it weren't for book club, I'd murder my husband in his sleep." I felt the yearning most when my as-yet-unmurdered husband, Thad, and I had dinner in a restaurant and saw couples our age laughing as the two of us ate our Loaded Nachos, alone. On the ride home, I'd announce, "I need a book club."

"I know, Vicki," Thad would reply, patting my thigh. "I know."

What I was really saying, of course, was "I need friends." But that phrase was too pathetic to utter, so I substituted "book club" as code. Like, "I get by with a little help from my 'book club.'" Like, "All you have to do is call, and I'll be there, yeah, yeah, yeah. You've got a 'book club.'" ➤➤

I'd never been so friendless. Sure, I had college friends I texted almost every day; my oldest pals were ones I'd had since fifth grade. I'd met my besties at my first real jobs. But none of them lived near us. It seemed as if everyone in our town not only had grown up here but still hung out with the kids they'd shared a prom limo with.

They didn't need new friends. I felt as though we weren't just back in high school—we were that exchange student from Finland whom people lent their biology notes to but didn't remember to invite to a bonfire at the beach.

I tried joining activities to make friends. I became a yoga teacher. I had a baby. I took my husband and said baby to a Unitarian church. I told an acquaintance who had a book club how much I wanted to be in it. I told her again. I had another baby. And another. While I met nice people being Miss Join-a-Lot, nothing clicked in a "Let's rent a shore house next summer" way.

So I got aggressive. I made cute invitations to a Halloween party at our home, and I walked along my street, leaving one at every house with a swing set or trampoline. Not only did almost everyone come, but we shared our numbers and e-mail addresses and vowed to do it again

soon. I was 100 percent certain that Thad and I would be invited to a play-date/potluck/party within the month and be friendless no more. We waited and waited—for four years.

Thad and I tried to laugh. It took a few more lonely dinners out and zero book club invites for me to ask him,

for real, "Is there something wrong with us?"

As it turned out, there wasn't something wrong with us. There was something wrong with just about every person we knew like us—that is, an over-30 adult. Married or not. Kids or not. Suburbs or not. Everyone we talked to in our age bracket who wanted to "join a

book club" couldn't make it happen.

Not long ago, a friend—an old friend from grade school, to be clear—forwarded me an article about forming new relationships in your 30s and 40s. It was reassuring to read how a psychology professor found that "people tended to interact with fewer people as they moved toward midlife but that they grew closer to the friends they already had." So that was why we couldn't make friends.

"Do you really feel like you have time for new cast members?" asked Tricia (not her real name), the neighbor who broke our drought by inviting us to a party two years ago, at

“
*I was 100
percent certain
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to a party within
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We waited—for
four years.*

which my six-year-old threw up on her rug. "Kids, work, family, house, keeping up with friends from pre-kid life ... I feel like any time I find should be for me, my husband, and the kids to reconnect."

I couldn't deny this made me hate Tricia a little, in the same way I hate people who have naturally curly hair or can play the piano by ear. But I also didn't believe her. I'd so often tried to convince myself that I was too busy for a "book club" that I did more just so that it was true. When my girls hit school age, I joined the PTA, directed their talent shows, and started singing with the church choir. I tiled the kitchen backsplash. "I have no time for new friends," I'd say to people in the alto section and at drop-off.

Then it would happen. I'd meet someone. We'd click. I'd start to believe she was a bona fide friend. And then I'd get a form from school or from the athletic association: the "In Case of Emergency" form. When I saw the sheet from the after-care program, I nearly cried. There were not one, not two, not three, but four lines on which we were to list people who could "act on behalf of parents." All four needed to have local phone numbers, and all I had was the digits of three other second-grade moms.

It was the defining line of friendship: Whom could you ask, count on, trust, to take care of your kids in a crisis? I wouldn't have hesitated to write down the numbers of my old

friends. But they weren't here.

"Thad, I need a book club."

"I know, Vicki. I know."

AFTER 12 YEARS, here's how it finally went down: A mom whose son was in my middle daughter's class posted on Facebook that she needed a book recommendation. I posted two. She posted that she'd read them. I thought, She should be my new friend. I did not post that.

Then she posted: "We should start a book club!" First, I wept quietly. Second, I called Thad. Third, I watched as other class moms posted that they wanted to join too.

I immediately created a page on Facebook; I even gave us a name: "Westmont's Illustrious Novel Enthusiasts, a.k.a. W.I.N.E." (Too soon?)

Five meetings later, I was still texting my college friends more than anyone in the club. But I had all the members' numbers in my phone. Who knew where this could go? We fulfilled the conditions for BFFs—seeing each other often, living nearby.

It was a promising pool for recruiting four local emergency contacts. It was, pretty much, perfect. In fact, it was so perfect that I didn't want to chance anything ruining it. And just like that, I'd become the very thing I'd spent years trying to infiltrate.

After Meeting Six, I posted on our secret Facebook page: "What would everyone say about capping the book club at the number we're at?" **R**



Points to Ponder

AS SOON AS a large group of people or citizens laughs at something, it's never the same. That's the most powerful thing in the world. They say laughter is the best medicine, but it's the best revolution too.

ROSEANNE BARR,
comedian, on salon.com

[I'M] DISSATISFIED with the answer "I don't really like to put labels on things" ... Putting labels on things is how people find the exit during a fire and make sure they're adding vanilla extract to the cake instead of arsenic.

ALANA MASSEY,
writer, on medium.com

[SCRIPTURE'S] POWER comes from its malleability. You can read it in any way that you want to. If you are a violent misogynist, you will find plenty in the Koran or in the Bible to justify your viewpoint. If you are a peaceful feminist, you will find just as much.

REZA ASLAN, PHD,
religious scholar,
on The Daily Show with Jon Stewart

PEOPLE ASK ME sometimes, When—when do you think it will be enough? When will there be enough women on the court? And my answer is, When there are nine.

RUTH BADER GINSBURG,
Supreme Court justice, during a talk at
Georgetown University



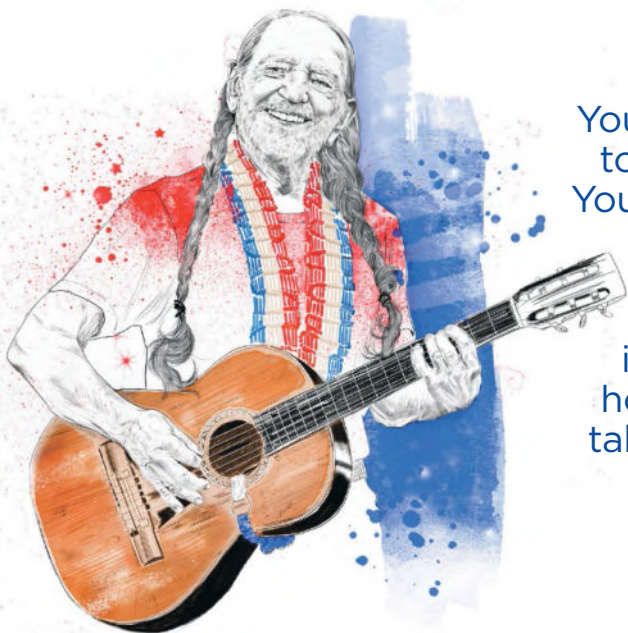
ON SHARING

I DON'T KNOW WHY people are so keen to put the details of their private life in public; they forget that invisibility is a superpower.

BANKSY, street artist, in Time Out New York

WHEN YOU PUT STUFF out there about yourself, people realize, Hey, this person admits he is flawed ... [my] being that way is going to be OK; I'm not going to be judged ... So, while it has, at times, worked against me, I think many, many times, it has worked for me.

JIM NORTON, comedian, on sweetphyllis.com



You sing the blues
to lose the blues.
You lift the burden
by transferring
it into a song.
I'll be damned
if I know why or
how that miracle
takes place, but it
always does.

WILLIE NELSON,
musician,

in his memoir *It's a Long Story*

FOR READERS, what they read is where they've been, and their collections are evidence of the trek.

WILLIAM GIRALDI,
novelist, in the New Republic

CHILDHOOD, especially when you're an only child, is like being plunked down on an isolated human outpost in deep space for the first 18 years of your life. Everything you know of Earth and its customs you hear from the humans charged with your rearing or pick up by chance from the TV.

ALEXANDRA PETRI,
*newspaper columnist, in her book
A Field Guide to Awkward Silences*

IN SPORTS, there are rules that keep you safe. In life, there are rules that keep the world from descending into total chaos. In both, there are rules that people make up to hide behind or for their own benefit. You have to be smart enough to know the difference.

RONDA ROUSEY,
UFC women's bantamweight champion,
in her memoir, *My Fight/Your Fight*

IF ANIMALS have rights, what are their responsibilities? If a lion has the right not to be hunted to death, does it also have a responsibility not to eat me? Frankly, I don't trust the lion to keep his half of the deal.

ADAM ROBERTS,
writer, in New Scientist

Day in and day out, the great majority of officers do their job the right way

Good Cops, Bad Cops

BY BOB SCHIEFFER FROM THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



BOB SCHIEFFER
was CBS
News's chief
Washington
correspondent
for 33 years
and moderator
of *Face the
Nation* for
24 years.

THE BEST TRAINING to be a reporter is to work the police beat because every story you cover is the worst moment in someone's life. If you can learn to get the right information under those circumstances, you won't be fazed by the high and mighty and certainly not by the on-the-make politicians and spin doctors—which is why I want to add a paragraph or two to the rash of stories lately about cops gone wrong.

This is not about them. This is about all the cops you *don't* read about. They deal much of the time with the dregs of our society: the schemers, the murderers, those who prey on the weak. And most of the time, the police deal with them humanely, and as they should.

What we overlook is just how difficult that can be sometimes. It's not easy to remain passive when a child beater looks you in the eye and tells you—you have to understand, the kid was keeping him awake. It takes a lot of professional training and strong character not to respond in anger. I know because I spent my early years listening to some of these awful people. Sometimes I wanted to hit them myself. I didn't, but it helped me understand how hard it is to do a cop's job right. As hard as it is, the great majority of our cops still do just that.

R

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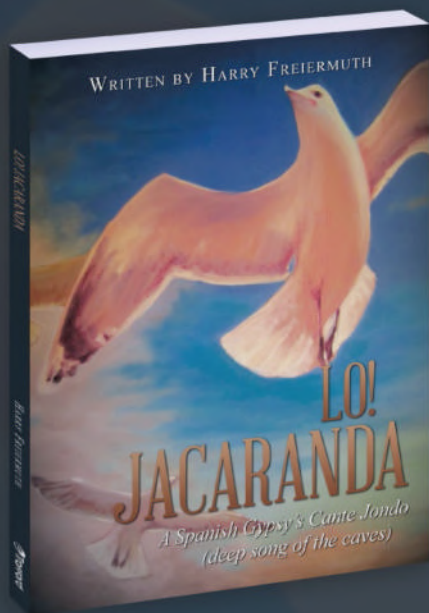
ILLUSTRATION BY JOE MCKENDRY



LO! JACARANDA

*A Spanish Gypsy's Cante Jondo
(deep song of the caves)*

WRITTEN BY HARRY FREIERMUTH



Jacaranda is a young, Spanish-Gypsy woman in 1760s Spain. As fate would have it, she is born and raised as the daughter of a wealthy ranchero owner. A beautiful life of prosperity and love stretches on before her as the day of her betrothal approaches. However, before the wedding, her gypsy heritage is revealed, and her joy melts away.

AVAILABLE IN PRINT AND E-BOOK



Does a car company have to pay when a vehicle's fuel economy falls short of the maker's claims?

The Case Of the Gas Guzzler

BY VICKI GLEMBOCKI

IN 2006, Heather Peters paid \$30,486 in cash for a new Honda Civic Hybrid at a Santa Monica, California, dealership, expecting to get the fuel economy advertised on a sticker on the car's window and in its sales brochures: 49 mpg in the city and 51 on the highway.

However, Peters noticed that she never got more than 42 mpg, so in March 2008, she took the car to the dealer for a tune-up and continued to get repairs of all kinds there until 2011. During this time, in 2010, Peters received a free software update from Honda to "help prevent ... battery deterioration." After the upgrade, her gas mileage got even

worse—less than 30 mpg. In October 2011, Peters received notice of a class action lawsuit filed against Honda for anyone who owned or leased a 2003 to 2009 Civic Hybrid, "alleging generally that the fuel economy estimates [American Honda Motor] advertised for the [Honda Civic Hybrid] could not be achieved under normal driving conditions." The suit promised up to \$200 to dissatisfied customers.

"I thought it was a ridiculously low amount," says Peters, who, as a former lawyer, knew she had another option. "I figured, Why not go to small-claims court?"

On November 29, 2011, Peters filed a case in the Southwest District of ➤➤

the Superior Court of the State of California, claiming that Honda had “fraudulently represented gas mileage and hybrid performance. Also fraudulently induced me to do a software update that made things worse.” She asked for \$10,000 in damages, the limit in California.

Since lawyers aren’t permitted to represent a client in the state’s small-claims courts, Peters spoke for herself in the trial in January 2012, and Honda sent a company employee, who argued that the carmaker hadn’t violated any laws. The mileage

estimate, Honda explained, was provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and federal law required the company to include it on the sticker. Plus, Honda had testimony from many other Civic Hybrid customers who were satisfied with the fuel economy. The company contended that the gas mileage depended largely on how the car was driven and maintained.

Is Honda liable for the lower-than-advertised gas mileage on Heather Peters’s car? You be the judge.



THE VERDICT

On February 1, 2012, Superior Court Commissioner Douglas Carnahan issued his ruling in Peters’s favor, stating that Honda had committed fraud, though not intentionally. “Can a Honda hybrid driven in careful and tested ways achieve 50 mpg?” he asked. “No doubt. Did it happen with Peters’s car? No.” He awarded Peters \$9,867 in damages, mostly for the extra money she’d spent on fuel and the decrease in the car’s value. Peters got so much press attention for the case that she renewed her law license, intending to give other Honda drivers legal advice.

That May, the carmaker appealed. After a three-day trial in superior court, with a team of lawyers representing Honda, Judge Dudley Gray II overruled the lower court, stating that Honda had complied with EPA and Federal Trade Commission requirements. He called Honda’s mileage claims “non-actionable sales puffery” and Peters’s claim of vehicle sluggishness “unsupported by any objective evidence.” He took away Peters’s damage reward and ordered Peters to pay Honda \$75 to cover the costs of defending the case. “At least we educated the public about the availability of small-claims court,” says Peters, who these days is driving a Fiat 500. **R**

Agree? Disagree? Sound off at rd.com/judge.

Your True Stories

IN 100 WORDS

LOVE, EDITED

When I was raising my 14-year-old son as a single mother in Toronto, he helped me publish a magazine. One day, an incredibly handsome, soft-spoken, well-mannered visitor from Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, visited my office. We shared our experiences as volunteer editors. When he left, my son whispered, "Mom! Now, that's the kind of man you should marry!" I blushed and laughed it off and didn't think about it again. Eight years later, I met the same man again. He was now a widower. We married and are still together nine years later, coediting an international magazine.

MAHJABEEN DAYA, Brampton, Ontario

THE YELLOW HOUSE

I've lived in my condo 15 years now—long enough that I don't even see it anymore. I started dreaming about moving into a house, where I was bound to be happier. I fixated on little yellow houses somewhere in the suburbs of Chicago and watched for them from the train on



my commute. "Oh, look—there's one!" I'd say as it slid by. Then one day, sitting in the sun on my patio, I looked up and realized the outside of my condo was done in yellow siding. I already had a yellow house. And I was home! **ROSE McMILLS**, Woodridge, Illinois

EMERGENCY CONTACT

We'd divorced three years earlier and hadn't seen each other since, but for whatever reason, I never took her off my emergency contact list at the nearest hospital. After my accident, I was put in a medically induced coma, and when I woke, she was the only person in the room. She sat in a hospital recliner, watching *The View*, looking unshowered. She turned her head casually as I slowly came to. "It's just like you to have something like this happen," she said. "I'm here, so I figure I'll get us something to eat. What do you want?"

JAMES GATES, Watertown, South Dakota

To read more 100-word stories and to submit your own, go to rd.com/stories. If your story is selected for publication in the magazine, we'll pay you \$100.

FACES OF AMERICA

BY GLENN GLASSER

Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show

New York City, 2015

RONALD TROTTA with Schmitty the Weather Dog, Yorkshire terrier. "I'm a meteorologist. We go into schools and teach young kids to be excited about science, mathematics, and fashion—all at the same time!"

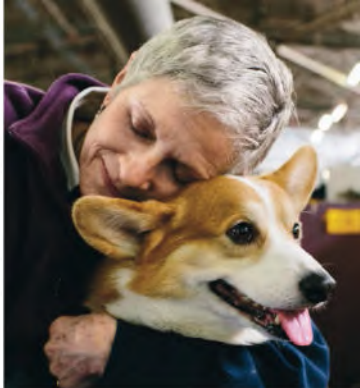
► **LINDA A. BUTSCH** with Sam, corgi.

"My husband passed away in '06. A few years later, the corgis we'd shared passed away too. I went to a breeder, and they had Sam. He saved my life. Just being the perfect dog and being there after ... I had a loss, you know. He filled the void."



▲ **RUBEN SANTANA** with King Tut, Pomeranian.

"I'm a dog stylist. This is King Tut. He's a rescue—he was abandoned in my styling salon, and they never came back for him. He charms the hearts of many. It's a wonderful thing, you know; he can put a smile on anyone's face, and that you came to us and wanted to talk to us—that is a testament to the power of King Tut. We also have three more." *How did you decide to bring just King Tut?* "He's the lightest."



▼ **DONNA SMITH** with RT, Irish wolfhound. "We have ten more at home."



▼ **JIM BUTLER** with Sasha, Tibetan mastiff. "His lion hairstyle is all natural."



FINISH THIS SENTENCE

I should get

Portland, OR

Planning to
change the world—
starting with a new mentor program
for high school kids!
HEATHER BRAKER

**Finishing
things**

I sta—
ERIK GRAY

Cedar City, UT

Castle Dale, UT

Metalworking.

I miss bending and shaping silver
and copper—so much beauty.

SUZIE MORLAN CARRASCO

Denver, CO

Hammer pants!

MARI PEACOCK

Covina, CA

Exercising.

I am such a lazy bum.
JENNIFER CONWAY EHR

Phoenix, AZ

Reading the
**Sunday
comics.**

SHARON TAYLOR

Socializing.

I get
really nervous.
JANICE GILLILAND HOBBS

The pool.

It's hot out here!
AMBER PEREZ

Honolulu, HI

back into...

Playing the oboe.

When my mother died, I let go of the huge talent I had in high school. She loved hearing me play.

MELISSA RILEY MARTIN

Mediapolis, IA

The simple things

in life: family, faith, and friends.

DON VACCARIELLO

Novelty, OH

Someone else's shoes

when I'm feeling judgmental about that person.

NADIA CAVAGLIERE

Farmingdale, NY

Howell, NJ

Waking before dawn.

It breathes life into the start of my day.

CAREY LOCH

Taking my goats on walks

through the mountains—as soon as I get a new hip.

DEBORAH SOUTH

Rogersville, TN

Candler, NC

Comedy.

Laughter is the best prescription for any ailment and has no negative side effects.

DEBI NEVEL DRECKSLER

Saginaw, TX

Dancing naked.

Don't judge.

JULES CANTILA

Jacksonville, FL

Go to [facebook.com/readersdigest](https://www.facebook.com/readersdigest) for the chance to finish the next sentence.

Life

IN THESE UNITED STATES



AH, MARRIAGE. After our son gave the dog a bath, my husband came home from work. He took one look at the bathtub and asked me, “Did you just shave your legs?”

He was serious.

SHELLY TERPSTRA, Grandville, Michigan

THE TASK FOR a woman at our Sunday school class was to record all the prayer requests on a whiteboard.

Recently, our teacher asked us to pray for the new Bible study he was leading on the book *Heaven*. It appears our secretary ran out of space that day because we were asked to “pray for Keith’s BS on ‘Heaven.’”

ANN GUINN, Reno, Nevada

MY KIDS JUST introduced themselves as “Let’s Go” and “We’re Late.”

@LURKATHOMEMOM

HERE ARE notes from teachers that expose what they really feel about your kids:

■ “The improvement in his handwriting has revealed his inability to spell.”

■ “French is a foreign language to Fowler.”

■ “He has given me a new definition of stoicism: He grins, and I bear it.”

Source: telegraph.co.uk

I JUST GOT a fruit juicer because they say juicing adds years to your life. What they don’t tell you is the years you add juicing, you lose cleaning your juicer.

Comedian **KYLE DUNNIGAN**, in the *New York Post*

UPON HEARING yet another name she couldn’t pronounce, my friend said, “In my day, if people were trying to pick a name for their child,

they put all their favorites in a kettle and picked one. Today, they just throw the kettle out the window and name the child whatever sound it makes when it lands.”

R. N., via e-mail

MY FATHER and teenage son were driving along the hair-raising mountain roads of Montana. After a while, my son offered to take the wheel so my father could nap.

“No, thanks,” said Dad. “I’m more awake when you’re driving.”

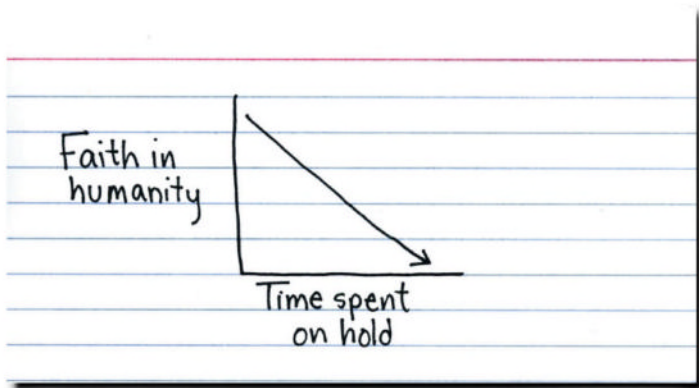
EUNICE BARROW, Silverton, Oregon

“LET’S JUST SHARE a dessert,” said the worst person on the planet.

🐦 @MDOB11

Got a funny story about friends or family? It could be worth \$100. For details, see page 7 or rd.com/submit.

OFF THE CHARTS!



Deliciously
HEART HEALTHY

While many factors affect heart disease, diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease.

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ART *of* LIVING



After surviving unimaginable trauma, a family offers some hard-won insights into how to help someone who is suffering

The Art of Offering Love and Comfort

BY DAVID BROOKS FROM THE *NEW YORK TIMES*

 **TRAGEDY HAS TWICE** visited the Woodiwiss family. In 2008, Anna Woodiwiss, then 27, was working for a service organization in Afghanistan. On April 1, she went horseback riding and was thrown, dying from her injuries. In 2013, her younger sister Catherine, then 26, was hit by a car while biking to work. She has endured and will continue to endure a series of operations. The recovery is slow.

A victim of trauma, as Catherine writes in a remarkable blog post for *Sojourners*, experiences days “when you feel like a quivering, cowardly shell of yourself, when despair yawns as a terrible chasm, when fear paralyzes any chance for pleasure.” Her mother, Mary, talks about the deep organic grief that a parent feels when he or she has lost one child and seen another badly injured, a pain felt in bones and fiber.

But suffering is a teacher. Through their own experiences, the Woodiwisses drew a few lessons about how those of us outside the zone of trauma might better communicate with those inside. There are no uniformly right responses, but their collective wisdom, some of it contained in Catherine’s piece, is quite useful:

Do be there.

Some people think that those who experience trauma need space. Assume the opposite. Most people need presence. The Woodiwisses say they were awed after each tragedy by the

number of people, many of whom had been mere acquaintances, who showed up and offered love from across the nation and the continents. They were also disoriented by close friends who simply weren’t there, who were afraid or too busy. Anna and Catherine’s father, Ashley, says he could detect no pattern to help predict who would provide the ministry of presence and who would fumble.

Don’t compare, ever.

Don’t say “I understand what it’s like to lose a child. My dog died, and that was hard too.” Even if the comparison seems more germane, don’t make it. Each trauma should be respected in its uniqueness. “From the inside,” writes Catherine, comparisons “sting as clueless, careless, or just plain false.”

Do bring soup.

Nonverbal expressions of love are as healing as eloquence. When Mary was living with Catherine during her recovery, a friend noticed she didn’t have a bath mat. He went to Target and got one. Mary says she will never forget that.

Do not say “You’ll get over it.”

“There is no such thing as ‘getting over it,’” Catherine writes. “A major disruption leaves a new normal in its wake. There is no ‘back to the old me.’”

Do be a builder.

The Woodiwisses distinguish between firefighters and builders. Firefighters drop everything and arrive at the moment of crisis. Builders are there for years and years, walking alongside as the victims live out in the world. Very few people are capable of performing both roles.

Don't say "It's all for the best" or try to make sense of what has happened.

Catherine and her parents speak with astonishing gentleness and quiet thoughtfulness, but it's pretty obvious that these tragedies have stripped away their tolerance for pretense and unrooted optimism.

Ashley also warned against those who overinterpret and try to make sense of the inexplicable. Even the deeply religious—the Woodiwisses are devout Christians—should worry about taking theology beyond its limits. Theology is a grounding in ultimate hope, not a formula to explain away each individual event.

I'd say that what these experiences call for is a sort of passive activism. We have a tendency, especially in an achievement-oriented culture, to want to solve problems and repair brokenness. But what seems to be



needed is the art of presence: to perform tasks without trying to control or alter the elemental situation. Allow nature to take its course. Grant the sufferers the dignity of their own process. Sit simply through moments of pain and uncomfortable darkness. Be practical, mundane, simple, and direct.

Ashley and Mary went to Afghanistan a few months after Anna's death. They remember that as a time out of time. They wept with Afghan villagers and felt touched by grace. "That period changed me and opened my imagination," recalls Ashley. "This thing called presence and love is more available than I had thought. It is more ready to be let loose than I ever imagined."



When it's OK to cut corners—and when you might sacrifice safety and taste

How Bad Is It ...?

BY KELSEY KLOSS

■ TO BOIL INSTEAD OF SIMMER?

Really Bad. A simmer consists of small yet constant pockets of bubbling and a few wisps of steam (roughly 180°F). A boil produces constant steam, with large bubbles quickly rising to the surface (212°F). Boiling destroys the protein in meat, drying it out. However, a boil followed by a cold rinse is best for colorful vegetables like green beans, which can fade when simmered. The takeaway? Closely follow the method the recipe calls for.

■ TO COOK BEFORE THE OVEN IS PREHEATED?

Somewhat Bad. This shortcut could raise your risk of food-borne illness, especially if food has been out at room temperature for a while. When food is in the danger zone of 40°F to



140°F, bacteria multiply quickly. To be safe, it's better to wait until the oven reaches cooking temperature.

■ TO JUST CUT AWAY THE MOLD?

It Depends. Firm foods are more likely to be safe than soft foods. Mold generally can't penetrate deep into hard cheeses like Asiago and cheddar, so it's OK to cut off about an inch. The same goes for firm produce like bell peppers and carrots. However, chuck moldy-looking foods with high moisture content—yogurt, soft cheeses, cooked leftovers, and bread. Porous foods are likely to be contaminated beneath the surface.

■ TO BAKE WITH COLD EGGS?

Somewhat Bad. Many recipes suggest bringing eggs to room temperature before baking, since ingredients mix best at the same temperature. This creates a smooth batter that rises well for fluffy desserts like angel food cake. For cookies, which are chewier if baked with chilled batter, mix ingredients at room temperature, then chill for 30 minutes.

■ TO SKIP THE PASTA RINSE?

Not Bad at All. It's actually your best option. Rinsing noodles washes away flavor and natural starch, which helps yummy sauce stick. It's why some recipes suggest saving pasta water to use in sauce. Instead, skip the wash and spread drained pasta on a pan to cool.

■ TO REFREEZE DEFROSTED FOOD? **Somewhat Bad.**

If you defrost food in the refrigerator (which should be 40°F or below), it is safe to return to the freezer, but it will taste worse. Defrosting melts frozen water molecules, causing dryness and changes in texture and flavor. Defrosting the food a second time increases these effects.

■ TO NOT LET MEAT REST?

Really Bad. If you don't let meat sit after it's done cooking, delicious juices will pool out of the meat, leaving your dinner dry and bland. These juices migrate toward the center of the meat cut during cooking. Allowing just five to ten minutes for a small cut like a boneless, skinless chicken breast or steak allows juices to redistribute throughout.

■ TO USE A BLENDER AND A FOOD PROCESSOR INTERCHANGEABLY?

Somewhat Bad. For liquid foods like salad dressings and soups, a blender mixes ingredients efficiently. But these recipes can be messy in a food processor, which can leak if any liquid covers the blade piece. For solids like veggies and nuts, however, opt for the food processor. A typical blender's tiny blade creates air pockets that make it difficult for solids to mix. **R**

Sources: Sabrina Sexton, program director of culinary arts at the Institute of Culinary Education; Candy Argondizza, vice president of culinary and pastry arts at the International Culinary Center; fsis.usda.gov; fda.gov; thekitchn.com; finecooking.com; eatingwell.com; cookinglight.com; cdc.gov

Superfoods That Enhance Your Appearance

BY DORI KATZ FROM *FAMILY CIRCLE*

■ BELL PEPPERS AND BROCCOLI

Vitamin C increases production of collagen, the skin's building block. In other words, fewer fine lines around your eyes and mouth.

Serving size: 1 cup fresh or ½ cup cooked per day

■ **WILD SALMON** Omega-3 fatty acids help the skin retain moisture, making it soft and supple. The nourishing ingredient also maintains the scalp's natural oils. **Serving size:** 4 to 6 ounces, 3 times per week

■ **BLACKBERRIES AND RASPBERRIES** Ellagic acid protects against UV rays and can help prevent wrinkles. **Serving size:** ½ cup fresh or frozen per day

■ **TOMATOES** Lycopene may help prevent sun damage. The potent antioxidant works best when cooked, so homemade marinara sauce and

tomato soup are both great options.

Serving size: Aim for at least 1 portion (about ¼ cup of sauce or 4 tomato slices) 5 times per week.

■ **DARK CHOCOLATE** Cocoa flavonols improve circulation and blood flow to the scalp, delivering nutrients that may help keep it and your hair healthy. **Serving size:** 1 ounce or 150 calories per day

■ **SWEET POTATOES** Beta-carotene destroys free radicals, preventing damage to skin cells. The body converts beta-carotene to vitamin A, which fights signs of aging.

Serving size: One per day. Swap in carrots, cantaloupe, or mangoes for a comparable effect.

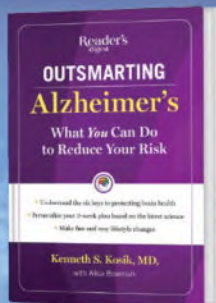


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PROP STYLIST: SARAH GUIDO-LAAKSO FOR HALLEY RESOURCES

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Sitting with a Soldier

BY STACY CLARK FROM THE *BOSTON GLOBE*



BETWEEN FLIGHTS, as I sat in the Denver airport near my gate, a young man, maybe half my 46 years, approached me. He tilted his head toward the chair next to mine, then toward my suitcase blocking the chair. There were many open seats. Why this one? I thought. When he sat, I noticed the markings on his duffel bag and his faded camouflage uniform. I asked. He nodded. I bowed my head slightly in honor of all I could never know to thank him for. He asked where I was headed. “Home.”

Braced in the chair, hands on his knees, he told me he had just come

from Afghanistan. He was going home for a few days of leave. He planned to surprise his mother in Florida. I asked how long it had been since he’d seen her (five years). I asked what he was looking forward to at home (a shower). He said it was almost harder to leave the war than to stay, leaving others behind, knowing he had to go back. But this might be his last chance, he said without saying, to see his mom.

Absent invention, I can’t re-create how each word passed back and forth. But I remember what he said. I remember how he scanned the room warily as he talked. How when

he looked at me, his eyes kept no distance. He seemed to want something from me. I could not tell what.

I was a mother; he, a son. Even though he was muscled and desert-hardened, he looked too small, too gentle to hold a gun, to carry a war.

He said it was hard to stop scanning for danger. Yesterday, he'd been in the desert. Fellow soldiers, men under his command, had blown into pieces around him. Today, he was in an airport trying to fathom anger over flight delays, the rush for coffee. He didn't know how to be, here in this place.

I thought maybe I understood. Only weeks before, my friend's teenage son had died suddenly. One evening, after spending still hours with a broken mother, I went to my daughter's theater performance. In the crowded lobby before the show, mothers complained about their

seats and bemoaned other small slights, but only compassion made sense to me. I felt disoriented, distant. I told the soldier beside me about this. He breathed deeply, showed a small smile. I had given him a sliver of connection.

He'd seen the raw and unbearable. He knew what was real and mattered. But he did not know how to tell us. This was what he needed from me, I realized. He did not want the seat beside mine. He wanted to sit with me. He needed to feel safe and understood for a brief while between here and there.

I did not know his name, how his surprise would turn out, how long his tour of duty would last. I hoped his mother had a strong heart. We sat together until our flights were called and then said goodbye, two strangers heading home. **R**

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FREE SPEECH OR CHEAP TALK?

If every word a person says has to be right and balanced and fair,
I will jump off a tall thing onto a hard place.

LOUIS C.K.

Say what you want about the Amish ... they're not on Twitter.

 @RICKYGERVAIS

Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will make me
go in a corner and cry by myself for hours.

ERIC IDLE

Ingenious Ways Cities Attract Tourists

BY BETH DREHER

Create a Big To-Do

In 1987, in an effort to entice tourists to travel Tennessee's back roads, Fentress County officials distributed a map of 300 attractions, including yard sales, that dot the area along Highway 127. As demand for cheap, local wares grew, so did the number of vendors. Twenty-eight years later, the **World's Longest Yard Sale** spans nearly 700 miles from Alabama to Michigan and attracts more than 100,000 visitors the first Thursday through Sunday of August every year.

Give Away a Car

Last winter, the **Minneapolis** tourism board gave away a 2015 Chevy Volt at a March auto show and offered a 10 percent discount on a stay at the Hilton downtown during January. Bonus attraction: Minneapolis's heated skyway network lets visitors (and locals) travel, coatless, along 80 blocks through buildings filled with shops and restaurants.



Change Undesirable Names

To set tourists' minds at ease, local officials in **Melbourne**, Australia, changed the name of Shark Bay to Safety Beach. It seems to have worked: The beach attracts up to 10,000 visitors a year and hasn't had a shark attack in 60-plus years.

Play Up the Local Accent

A quick TripAdvisor search proves that tourist satisfaction in cities such as **Nashville**, **Glasgow**, and **London** can often be measured in drawls, burrs, and brogues.

"The waitstaff and counter help's **New York** accents made the experience for tourists from Los Angeles worth the price of the meal," raved Katz's Deli visitor happytravel14. **R**

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One exhausted pet owner defends his decision to share the bed

Let Sleeping Dogs Lie

BY BILL BAROL FROM FAST COMPANY

☞ ONE NIGHT IN 1998, my wife and I fell asleep, our very young puppy, Mojo, on the bed between us. When we woke up the next morning and discovered there hadn't been any disastrous consequences, a thought balloon bloomed over our heads: Dog sleeps on bed. Snuggles with humans. Kind of nice. The reason I remember this: It was the last good night's sleep I ever got.

There are no hard numbers on how many pet owners "co-sleep" with their animals, but two studies presented at last year's annual meeting of the Associated Professional Sleep Societies confirm what any pet-loving idiot like myself can tell you: There are a lot of us, and we are walking around like zombies. One study surveyed 298 patients at a family practice clinic. About half reported sleeping with pets (more dogs than cats), and of those, 63 percent of respondents who shared a bed with a pet more than four nights a week reported poor sleep quality.

I'm no sleep scientist, but these figures seem low to me. Then again,

I'm usually pretty foggy. At my recent annual physical, my doctor asked me how I was sleeping. Not well, I told him. I suspected the dogs had something to do with that. "You have your dogs in the bed with you and your wife?" Yes, I told him. "What kind of dogs?" Labradors, I told him, hearing how ridiculous it sounded. He blinked and said incredulously, "Labradors? Plural?" Yes, I said in a meek voice.

That's right—my wife, Jennifer, and I share our king-size bed with 11-year-old, 60-pound Roxy and four-year-old, 55-pound Scout. (Mojo went to her reward several years ago. She was well rested.) Roxy and Scout are small as Labs go, but their lust for a good night's sleep is outsize. They don't mind colonizing a disproportionately large swath of our bed to get it. If you were to watch a time-lapse video of a night in our bedroom, you would see Roxy and Scout sprawled peacefully across the vast middle of our enormous bed, the area that would correspond to the Midwest on a map of the United States, while Jennifer clings precariously to the



acquaintances I informally polled for this story. One, who sleeps with a 25-pound wheaten, compares it to “trying to share our bed with a piano bench.” Another was at least willing to do something about it. One recent night, when her two-year-old Great Dane jumped on the bed at 2 a.m., she “put up with it for about an

Atlantic seaboard and I try to avoid plummeting into the Pacific.

I know this is bad for me. The Division of Sleep Medicine at Harvard Medical School reports cheerily that “a lack of adequate sleep can affect judgment, mood, [and the] ability to learn and retain information and may increase the risk of serious accidents and injury. In the long term, chronic sleep deprivation may lead to a host of health problems, including obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and even early mortality.”

Yet night after night, my wife and I—two adults who train our dogs rigorously, insist on their good citizenship, and are otherwise firmly unsentimental about our status as pack leaders—decline to kick them out of our bed, and we wake up grouchy and stiff. As do many of the friends and

hour. Then I moved to the couch.”

Don’t misunderstand. I don’t discount the psychological satisfaction of curling up next to a slumbering dog or, I guess, cat. Psychologist Stanley Coren cites speculation among anthropologists that human-animal co-sleeping may even be encoded in people’s DNA, or animals’. It’s hard to ignore the elemental comfort of Roxy’s muffled snores or the whispery exhalation of Scout’s breath. The sounds say the day is done and the pack is together and safe.

Who am I to buck DNA? Even if tonight, at about 3 a.m., when I’m feeling less broad-minded, I give Scout a vicious shove that doesn’t wake her up. Even then, I will sleepily but deliberately act against my own physiological best interests and allow her to stay right where she is. **R**

Like My Father Always Said

BY ERIN MCHUGH FROM THE BOOK *LIKE MY FATHER ALWAYS SAID ...*

“WHENEVER I WAS about to do something foolish or dangerous—or something, I suppose, that simply displeased my father—he would say, ‘Don’t let a little fear and common sense stop you.’”

TODD, son of Ron

“Before you speak:
Is it kind? Is it true?
Is it necessary?”

DAVE, father of Wendy

“The universe is full of magical things, waiting for our wits to grow sharper.”

MATT, father of Sarah

“My father on all his children: ‘Between the hell of their living and the fear of their dying, there’s never a dull moment.’”

OLIVE, daughter of Tom

“In the ’60s, when my brothers would bring

their long-haired hippie friends home to dinner, my father would sit at the end of the dining room table and ask, ‘So, any news on the barber strike?’”

AMY, daughter of Jim

“My dad would say, ‘Before speaking, you should think about what you’re going to say for at least ten seconds. Then, hopefully, you’ll say nothing.’ I still follow this advice; it drives my wife crazy.”

DOUG, son of Steve

“Be good or be careful.”

DOMINIQUE, father of Michele

“Manners go a long way, and they don’t cost a dime.”

R

DICK, father of Dick Jr. and Patty



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How to choose the right sizes, shapes, and colors for your spaces

Boost the Beauty Of Any Room

BY KELSEY KLOSS



■ **THROW PILLOWS** To accent your couch, place two 20-inch-square pillows in a matching bold pattern in the corners. Overlap them with two 16-inch pillows in a coordinating solid color. Add one lumbar pillow with a subtle pattern (like a pinstripe) for balanced design.

■ **ARTWORK** Most people hang artwork too high. Place a piece so its bottom is only three to eight inches above furniture—lower for large pieces and slightly higher for small pieces. When there's too much space between furniture and a painting, the eye rests on the void, blank wall between the two pieces.

■ **BOOKSHELVES** Organize 60 percent of books vertically and 40 percent horizontally on the shelves. This creates balance yet spontaneity (and shows off the back of the bookshelf if

it's lined with a decorative fabric). Stack horizontal books lower than vertical ones: If the vertical books are 12 inches tall, place three to four books horizontally up to four inches high. Add green plants to soften the bookshelf, but avoid flowers, which can look cluttered and distracting.

■ **MIRRORS** Mirror, mirror, on the wall: What is the best placement of them all? Centered at about 57 inches high, experts say. This is an easy, strain-free eye level for most people. To create the illusion of more space, mount a mirror opposite a window to bounce light.

■ **RUGS** The size of the rug—say, for under the coffee table—will dictate how you arrange furniture around it. With an eight-by-ten-foot rug, situate the sofa and any chairs so that the



front legs of each are somewhere on the rug but the back legs are not. With a five-by-eight-foot rug, keep the sofa completely off, but still place the front legs of the chairs on it. In a large family room, use two rugs to create two separate living areas.

■ **DINING TABLES** In the market for a new one? Make sure it's wider than 36 inches. This allows room to eat, even when the center of the table is filled with serving dishes and centerpieces. Tight on space? Consider a round table. It fits well into a small corner and, with no edges, offers more eating space.

■ **COLOR SCHEMES** When choosing a color palette, assign 60 percent of the room a dominant color, 30 percent a secondary color, and 10 percent an accent color. In a classic room setting, this may translate to designating walls

the dominant color, upholstery the secondary color, and a floral arrangement or pillows the accent color. If you have a nice view outside, frame it by painting the interior window trims a dark color.

■ **COFFEE TABLES** Because couch seats today are typically about 20 inches high for easy sitting and standing, the ideal coffee table is 15 to 20 inches tall. Situate it 18 inches from the sofa; this is the average distance from a person's hip to kneecap (people usually sit perched on sofas in living rooms). In a casual family room, 18 inches gives space for lounging and comfortably walking around the furniture. Choose a coffee table that's two thirds as wide as the sofa. **R**

Sources: Bryan Sloan, owner of Sloan Interiors and senior adjunct professor at California College of the Arts; Susan Morgan, American Society of Interior Designers board member and principal designer of Susan Morgan Interiors; hgtv.com; apartmenttherapy.com; *Real Simple*; houzz.com, thedecorologist.com

ALL IN

A Day's Work



"Women love a man who wears Dirty Socks."

WHEN THE COFFEEMAKER went on the fritz, I joked that maybe it was the fault of the cockroaches. Our office manager was not amused.

"We don't have cockroaches," she said, putting me straight.

"What about all the roach traps?" I asked, pointing to one.

"A lot you know—those aren't roach traps," she sniffed. "They're mouse-traps." **A. S., Croton-on-Hudson, New York**

SCENE: I'm on the phone with a customer.

Me: Was the first letter of that name an *F* as in *Frank* or an *S* as in *Sam*?

Customer: It's an *S* ... as in *Frank*.

JACK TOLIN, Salem, Missouri

ANYONE WHO SAYS the sexes were created equal hasn't worked in an office with one thermostat.

Comedian MATT WOHLFARTH

GONNA BE AWAY from your desk for a while? Borrow one of these tried-and-true out-of-office messages:

■ “I am currently out at a job interview and will reply to you if I fail to get the position.”

■ “Hi. I’m thinking about what you’ve just sent me. Please wait by your PC for my response.”

■ “I’m not in the office right now, but if it’s important, tweet me using #YOUAREINTERRUPTING-MYVACATION.”

Source: hubspot.com

I WAS PERFORMING my musical act at an elementary school one day. The principal charged all the kids 25 cents each to impress upon them that art isn’t free. As the kindergartners filed in, one scowling little boy

fixed me with a hard stare and said, “This had better be worth a quarter.”

I can honestly say that was the most stressful gig I’ve ever played.

GERRI GRIBI, *Green Bay, Wisconsin*

WHAT DID THE schizophrenic bookkeeper say? I hear invoices!

STEPHEN PICKERING, *Marshall, Michigan*

MY FRIEND IS an elementary school teacher who shares her classroom stories on Facebook. She recently posted the following: “Question of the day: ‘Miss Kassa, do you work?’”

KATHY SUREY, *Elmira, Ontario*

Know any funny lingo from other jobs? Send it over—it could be worth \$100. For details, go to rd.com/submit.



WITH A SIDE OF SASS

Waitresses and hash slingers have their own language. Connect the lingo with the dish to see if you have what it takes to work in a diner:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Battery Acid | A. Side order of hash |
| 2. Clean Up the Kitchen | B. Add chocolate syrup |
| 3. Drag One Through the Garden | C. Make it a takeout order |
| 4. Fly Cake | D. Add all the condiments |
| 5. Give It Shoes | E. Grapefruit juice |
| 6. Make It Cry | F. Raisin cake |
| 7. Rubber in a Bun | G. Add onions |
| 8. Throw It in the Mud | H. Steak sandwich |

Source: *Taste of Home*

Answers: 1-E; 2-A; 3-D; 4-F; 5-C; 6-G; 7-H; 8-B

Struggling to be heard? It may not be their hearing—but your volume.

First Aid for Your Voice

BY SUSAN INCE

WHEN I ENTER a family reunion, relatives crank up their hearing aids. Last summer, I worked in a jewelry shop, cheerfully greeting customers, then wondering if they were ignoring me or simply couldn't hear me. At parties, I'm often asked to repeat myself to the point of just smiling and giving up. This scares me because my mother's puny voice eventually became so small that phone calls were torturous, then impossible.

While hearing and vision issues are prominent in many discussions of aging, there's often silence on how our voices age. In fact, after 65, about three in ten people have speaking difficulty serious enough to be diagnosed as a voice disorder. Problems can start with retirement, at menopause, or at even younger ages in those with certain diseases or who overuse their vocal system

because their jobs require constant chatter or speaking in a noisy setting. Fortunately, there are a variety of ways—from easy maintenance tips to surgical fixes—that can help you avoid sounding old or losing the ability to make yourself heard.



Too Hoarse to Talk

Relentless, high-volume talking is in the job description for call-center employees, attorneys, and especially teachers. Half of all teachers develop voice problems at some point in their careers, according to some estimates.

Self-described “talker”

Kaysi Hamilton, 39, a math teacher and former cheerleader, rarely gets a break from speaking throughout the school day. When Hamilton, of Alvord, Texas, became hoarse last April, she figured it was just allergies. As Hamilton powered through her

workdays, she couldn't raise her pitch, at times her voice would drop out entirely, and her neck muscles were so tense that swallowing became difficult; she felt as if she were choking. She counted the days until summer break, but things didn't improve.

"If your voice doesn't recover over a week or even a season like summer, there's likely a permanent voice problem that needs fixing, such as nerve damage or a growth on the vocal folds," says Ingo Titze, PhD, director of the National Center for Voice and Speech.

A few months later, in July, Hamilton consulted ear, nose, and throat (ENT) specialists. They saw a pea-size polyp (a swelling in the vocal cord's mucous membrane) dangling like a water balloon from one of her vocal cords. Polyps can occur with long-term exposure to irritants such as cigarette smoke and chemical fumes, as well as because of chronic allergies and excessive voice use. Hamilton's doctor, Ted Mau, MD, director of the voice center at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, recommends that patients start with voice therapy to learn better habits, even if surgery to remove the polyp will almost certainly be needed.

Hamilton's therapy focused on massaging and relaxing her tense throat and neck muscles. She learned techniques to make more use of natural cavities in the head to ➔



VOICE-CHANGING MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Temporary hoarseness is normal when you get a **cold** (infection causes your vocal cords to swell, interfering with their normal vibration). **Allergy and sinus problems** can create a postnasal drip that irritates vocal cords. Many allergy pills also dry out vocal cords, so ask about using alternative meds, sinus washes, and medications to thin mucus (such as Mucinex, used with plenty of water). Don't clear your throat to get rid of phlegm (this bangs the vocal cords together and is a harmful habit). Another vocal cord irritant is **gastroesophageal reflux disease** (GERD) that reaches the throat. GERD medication or lifestyle changes (such as avoiding foods that cause heartburn) may be all it takes to feel better. In rare cases, voice changes can be the first sign of a **vocal cord cancer** or a symptom of a neurological problem such as **Parkinson's** disease. Don't ignore a voice change that lasts more than three weeks. While a workup will check for these conditions, it's likely that changes in your once-youthful voice will turn out to be owing—at least in part—to your speaking habits or aging.

create volume without overusing the throat. One common exercise: blowing raspberries (as babies do, trilling your lips to a *brruh* sound). Another involves singing through a straw (through a range of pitches or a favorite tune).

After surgery to remove her polyp and a tricky seven days of absolutely no talking, Hamilton responded to additional vocal exercises; within weeks, her vocal cords were working properly. She's more careful now (see sidebar, page 56), drinking plenty of water and taking voice breaks during the day. She hasn't had to resort to using a microphone to teach and is confident that she can continue to be a talker into old age.

Too Quiet to Be Heard

Bruce Lyon, 74, thought his wife, Kathie, should have her hearing checked. He suspected she wasn't paying attention when she'd ask "What did you say?" multiple times every day. But after his adult children repeatedly complained and even his grandson pointed out his very soft voice, Lyon acknowledged that the problem was his.

"It was a struggle to project enough to be heard, especially at restaurants or places with background noise," says Lyon, a retired university administrator in Carrollton, Georgia. His ENT doctor referred him to the Emory Voice Center at Emory University Hospital, where Lyon's vocal

apparatus was videotaped through a scope while he performed various vocal exercises.

The diagnosis: vocal fold atrophy, or presbyphonia. Vocal folds can weaken with age, especially after menopause in women or when the vocal muscles aren't used enough; Lyon, for example, had begun talking far less since his retirement several years earlier. During speech, vocal folds vibrate, rapidly touching and separating as air pushes through. As muscles lose volume, strength, and coordination, it takes more effort for the folds to close—and sometimes, as atrophy gets worse, they can't. The result is a softer, less resonant voice that requires far more effort to make audible. "Presbyphonia is a double whammy because it occurs at the same time that friends may have age-related hearing changes," says Edie Hapner, director of speech language pathology at the Emory Voice Center.

With Hapner, Lyon did a series of exercises called PhoRTE (pronounced "forte," like music instruction in Italian to play loudly or strongly). Modeled after strength training with older adults in sports medicine and physical therapy, the exercises start at about 50 percent of maximum effort, gradually building up in intensity. At home, Lyon practiced in two 15-minute sessions a day, energetically sustaining a vowel sound, gliding up and down his pitch range, calling out simple sentences in a loud ➡➡

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DOS AND DON'TS FOR A HEALTHIER VOICE

DO: Drink plenty of water, especially if you take medication. Some 80 percent of OTC and prescription drugs dry out the moist mucous layer that protects your vocal cords. Avoid large amounts of coffee, caffeinated sodas, and alcohol, which can dehydrate you.

DON'T: Yell. Screaming can lead to bumps or calluses on the vocal folds, so move closer or find another

way to get someone's attention (sudden silence can work). Some teachers use amplification headsets like those worn by fitness instructors.

DO: Sing. Trained singers generally sound younger longer than people who don't sing. If singing isn't your thing, read aloud every day to keep your vocal muscles working.

DON'T: Go low. Vocal fry—the raspy, Kim

Kardashian-like speech pattern increasingly popular among teens (both boys and girls)—may set them up for voice problems later because the vocal muscles don't get exercised at the full range of pitch.

DO: Find your natural speaking resonance. Say “mmm-hmm.” That's a good indicator of where your most comfortable resonance will be.

voice, and using a respiratory resistance device to strengthen his breath.

It worked. “The change was gradual, but within a couple of months, we weren't asking him to repeat himself,” says Kathie. Like any type of muscle conditioning, however, the maximum improvement lasts only with continued practice.

Lyon's voice problems were considered mild to moderate, but in some people, bowing of the vocal folds is so extreme that even with vocal therapy they won't touch. “We can inject a filler to augment the vocal cords. Some fillers use

the same material used to fill facial wrinkles,” says Elizabeth Guardiani, MD, an assistant professor of otorhinolaryngology and head and neck surgery at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

As for me, a chat with a voice specialist indicated nothing particularly abnormal about my voice. I am determined to drink more water and use my voice more—enunciating with French-language CDs or singing in the car. If that doesn't improve things, I won't hesitate to consult a pro. Lyon says he wishes he'd gone for help three years earlier. **R**



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NEWS FROM THE

World of Medicine

BY KELSEY KLOSS

Song Stuck in Your Head? Try This

Can't stop singing the latest pop ditty? Chew it out. British researchers played a popular song for nearly 100 students. Subjects were asked to not think about the song and to chew gum vigorously, tap their fingers, or do nothing. On average, the students chewing gum heard the song about 30 percent less often than the others. The part of the brain that controls oral motor activity may interfere with the memory process that replays songs.

Flex for Fewer Headaches

A Danish study compared 30 healthy adults with 60 adults who regularly experienced tension headaches. Researchers tested the strength of participants' various neck muscles and the strength of their shoulders when

raising their arms. Healthy people had 26 percent stronger extensor muscles (in the back of the neck) and more shoulder strength than those with tension headaches. Building muscle strength may reduce tension headaches, but further studies need to test that hypothesis.

Surprising News About Men and Osteoporosis

It is often perceived as a woman's disease, but osteoporosis will cause

one in four men over 50 to break a bone. This risk increases for smokers. National Jewish Health researchers recorded the bone density of more than 3,000 smokers and former smokers ages 45 to 80. Sixty percent of men had vertebral fractures compared with 40 percent of women. Current guidelines recommend bone den-



sity testing only for women, but men with risk factors like smoking should ask a doctor about getting tested.

Eat This Before Grocery Shopping

At the start of a shopping trip, Cornell researchers randomly gave 120 people a sample of an apple, a cookie, or nothing. Those who received the apple bought 28 percent more fruits and vegetables than those who got a cookie and 25 percent more than those with no snack.

Effects of Sugar on Stress

In a new study published in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*, 19 women consumed beverages for 12 days. Eight women had aspartame-sweetened beverages; others had drinks sweetened with table sugar. After the 12 days, stress hormone levels were lower in the sugar group and higher in the aspartame group. Sugar appeared to decrease stress activity in the brain, which may help explain bad, addiction-like eating patterns.

Tylenol Mutes Pain—and Feelings

Researchers at Ohio State University had 80 college students take either a 1,000 mg dose of acetaminophen (Tylenol) or a placebo pill. An hour later, participants rated 40 photographs designed to provoke positive or negative reactions. Those who'd taken

acetaminophen gave more muted responses for all images. The drug alters the brain in various ways, but researchers continue to study exactly why the medication blunts emotions.

A Scientific Way to Stop Procrastinating

University of California researchers asked more than 1,100 participants to imagine saving for a future event. They were told to think about a newborn's college education in 18 years and one's own retirement in 30 years or 40 years. Half of the participants, however, saw the time in terms of days: 6,570 days, 10,950 days, and 14,600 days, respectively. On average, those who thought in terms of days planned to start saving four times sooner than those thinking in years.

Clinical Trial? There's an App for That

A series of apps created with Apple's ResearchKit framework was recently released to facilitate the often time-consuming and expensive process of enrolling and tracking participants in clinical trials. To monitor their own progress, users complete tasks (such as a finger-tapping exercise to test a Parkinson's patient's speed of movement)—resulting in data that can be shared with researchers. Within a month of the launch, about 60,000 patients had registered for the apps. The kit is free in the App Store; an Android version may be developed. **R**

Subtle clues—from handwriting to snoring—
can reveal the earliest warnings of illness.
Here's how to read your own distress signals.

SILENT SIGNS *your* BODY *is in* BIG TROUBLE

BY HALLIE LEVINE



YOUR GUT IS IN BIG TROUBLE

Damage to your teeth

"I often get referrals from dentists with patients who don't feel heartburn or other reflux symptoms, but their teeth enamel is completely worn down," says Evan Dellon, MD, a gastrointestinal (GI) specialist at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine. Many are shocked to learn they have acid reflux. While sugary drinks wear down teeth at the front of your mouth, acid from your esophagus tends to dissolve enamel of the teeth at the back.

Other subtle but suspicious symptoms of reflux include a persistent sore throat, coughing, unexplained wheezing, or a frequent foul taste in your mouth. If you or your dentist notices any of these warning signs, see a GI specialist promptly. Untreated reflux not only leads to tooth decay but can also increase your risk for esophageal cancer.

Itchy, blistery skin rash

This reaction, which breaks out on the elbows, knees, butt, back, or scalp, may look suspiciously like eczema, but it could be a more serious issue: celiac disease, an autoimmune condition in which ingesting even the tiniest amount of gluten causes your body to attack its own intestines. Up to 25 percent of people with celiac have this rash, known as dermatitis herpetiformis. Many patients have no digestive symptoms.

When someone with celiac consumes gluten, the body releases an antibody known as IgA, which attacks the intestines; sometimes IgA also collects in small blood vessels underneath the skin, triggering the telltale rash. Unlike people with other forms of celiac, patients with dermatitis herpetiformis don't have to undergo an endoscopic biopsy for a definitive diagnosis. A doctor can biopsy the rash and look for antibodies that indicate celiac. Once you start a gluten-free diet, the rash should disappear, and you'll protect your body from other long-term, serious damage of celiac disease, such as osteoporosis or small intestine cancer.

Hemorrhoids

About one third of patients with Crohn's disease—an inflammatory disorder of the GI tract—have a form that affects just the anal region. It manifests as sores, ulcerations, or fleshy growths outside the area, which can be mistaken for hemorrhoids. "Patients will say sitting is so unpleasant, it's like they're perched on top of a marble," says David Rubin, MD, chief of gastroenterology at the University of Chicago Medical Center.

This type of Crohn's disease is often the most painful and has the worst prognosis, says Dr. Rubin. (If left untreated, Crohn's can lead to bowel obstruction, painful fissures, and even colon cancer.) If you have what appear to be hemorrhoids that

WARDROBE STYLIST: MARIE BLOMQUIST FOR AUBRI BULK; HAIR: NATE ROSENKRANZ FOR HONEY ARTISTS USING ALTERNA HAIR CARE; MAKEUP: SUZY GERSTEIN FOR HONEY ARTISTS USING KEYVIN AUCON BEAUTY; (PREVIOUS SPREAD) CORSET: LEOTARD: LIVETHEPROCESS.COM; (THIS SPREAD) CORSET BRA: LIVETHEPROCESS.COM; SWIM SHORT: AMERICANAPPAREL.NET



don't respond to treatment, Dr. Rubin recommends seeing a GI specialist for a second opinion as soon as possible. He or she can run blood tests to check for white blood cell count, C-reactive protein, and other markers that can indicate undiagnosed disease.

YOUR BRAIN IS IN BIG TROUBLE

Changes in handwriting

When you think of Parkinson's, you probably think of tremors, but a more telling early warning sign is handwriting that gets much smaller. Handwriting analysis identified patients in early stages more than 97 percent of the time, a 2013 Israeli study found. "I have patients write a sentence such as *Today is a nice day* ten times," says Michael S. Okun, MD, national medical director for the National Parkinson Foundation. "As they write, each sentence gets smaller and smaller, and the words become more crowded together."

Parkinson's disease occurs when nerve cells in the brain become damaged or die off. They stop producing as much dopamine, a chemical that sends signals to produce movement; this causes muscle stiffness in hands and fingers, which affects handwriting. Two other early red flags of Parkinson's: loss of smell—so you don't notice mouthwatering odors—and really intense dreams in which you thrash, kick, and punch during sleep.

If you notice any of these symp-

toms—and they last more than a couple of weeks—see a neurologist. The earlier Parkinson's is diagnosed, and the sooner you get control of symptoms, the better your quality of life will be.

Random bursts of anger

For many people, depression doesn't translate to weeping or lying listlessly on the couch. More than half of patients with depression have irritability and anger; in fact, those symptoms are associated with a more severe, longer-lasting form, according to a 2013 University of California, San Diego, study. "A classic case: Someone never suffered from road rage before, but now if they get cut off, they get so furious, they go crazy blaring their horn," says Philip Muskin, MD, a professor of psychiatry at Columbia University Medical Center. Women are found to have depression more often than men, but men are more likely to experience the disease through irritability and anger, according to a 2013 University of Michigan study.

If you're constantly snapping at your spouse or the slightest annoyance gets your heart racing—and these reactions have lasted for more than two weeks—there's a real chance that depression is the culprit.

Many cases of major depression respond well to a combination of antidepressants and cognitive behavior therapy, a short-term therapy that teaches skills to avoid damaging thoughts or actions. A British study

published this past April found that mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, which helps increase awareness of negative spirals, was as effective as meds in preventing a recurrence of depression over a two-year period.

Difficulty managing finances

When University of Alabama researchers followed 87 seniors with mild

memory problems, the 25 who went on to develop Alzheimer's showed declines over a yearlong period in skills like managing bank statements and paying bills. "One question we often ask: 'You're out to lunch, and the bill is \$60. What's a 15 percent tip?'" says Daniel Marson, PhD, director of the Alzheimer's Disease Center at the University of Alabama



in Birmingham. “People in the early stages of Alzheimer’s might struggle for a minute or two and then say, ‘It’s \$7.’” (The answer is \$9.) While everyone has an occasional senior moment, “it’s a red flag if these issues persist on a regular basis,” says Marson.

As Alzheimer’s develops, the brain’s cortex, which includes areas involved in thinking, planning, and remembering, shrivels up. This makes managing day-to-day finances increasingly difficult. Trouble completing other daily tasks, like following a favorite recipe or driving to a familiar location, is another early warning sign.

YOUR HEART IS IN BIG TROUBLE

Snoring

It’s a commonly known symptom of sleep apnea, which is associated with increased heart disease risk. But snoring may play a bigger role in cardiovascular disease than experts thought. A 2013 study found that even among patients without sleep apnea, snoring was linked with thickening of carotid arteries in the neck; such damage is a precursor to stroke and heart attack. Snoring was more strongly associated with this wall damage than were smoking, high cholesterol, or being overweight. Why? Snoring may damage the carotid arteries, which supply blood to the brain. “We think the arteries are reacting to the vibration of the snoring, since they’re very close to the throat,” says study author Kathleen Yarem-

chuk, MD, chair of the Department of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit.

Impotence

Men over age 45 who weren’t found to have heart disease but who had moderate to severe erectile dysfunction were up to 60 percent more likely to be hospitalized for heart problems over a four-year period, according to a 2013 Australian study. Arteries to the penis are smaller than elsewhere in the body, so they may become blocked even before a man has any other heart disease signs.

“It’s embarrassing. Many men just want to get a prescription and avoid discussing the problem with their doctor,” says New York-based cardiologist Nieca Goldberg, MD. “But it’s really important that they not dismiss it and get evaluated for heart disease.” If men have other risk factors, such as a family history of heart disease, the doctor may recommend advanced screening tests such as a coronary calcium scan.

Inflamed gums

A preliminary University of Florida study found that the same bacteria that cause gum disease also promote heart disease. Other research shows that older adults with high levels of certain bacteria in their mouths have thicker carotid arteries, a predictor of stroke and heart attack. “The link has to do with the body’s response to inflammation,” says



Stuart Froum, DDS, director of clinical research at NYU College of Dentistry.

Frequent cleanings (every three to six months) by a dentist can usually control early-stage gum disease. Treating gum disease was associated with fewer hospitalizations among people with heart disease or type 2 diabetes, according to a 2014 *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* study.

YOUR HORMONES ARE IN BIG TROUBLE

Frequent bathroom trips

When you start developing type 2 diabetes, your body becomes less efficient at breaking down food into sugar to use as fuel for energy. As a result, sugar builds up in the bloodstream, where it does silent but significant damage to blood vessels and nerves, says Ashita Gupta, MD, an endocrinologist at Mount Sinai Roosevelt Hospital in New York City. Your body frantically tries to dump the glucose buildup by flushing it out in your urine. Translation: “You’re going to the bathroom more frequently—and producing much more when you go,” says Dr. Gupta. You may find yourself getting up a few times during the middle of the night to pee. Since you’re urinating so much, you may be thirstier.

Ask your doctor about getting an A1c test, a blood test that measures your average blood glucose over the course of three months (other tests, such as the fasting blood glucose test, measure blood glucose levels only

on the day of the test). “The sooner type 2 diabetes is diagnosed, the more likely you can reverse it with lifestyle changes such as weight loss and exercise,” explains Dr. Gupta.

Forgetting people’s names

Spaced out on your neighbor’s name at a barbecue? It may be owing to stress or fatigue, but forgetfulness about little things such as names or grocery lists could indicate hypothyroidism, or low levels of thyroid hormone. “Patients complain that their brain just feels ‘fuzzier.’ Without thyroid hormone, everything just slows down,” says Dr. Gupta. “I ask whether they still feel tired after a full night’s sleep. If they still feel foggy, it may signal that something hormonal—like an underactive thyroid—is the culprit.” Other signs include always feeling cold, low libido, and food not tasting as good as it used to.

Because these symptoms are often vague and seemingly unrelated, it’s easy to blow them off. About half of the 30 million Americans who suffer from a thyroid disorder are unaware of it, according to the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists. But if you have any of the symptoms, it’s worth getting tested. “When patients are treated with thyroid medication, they’re always amazed at how much sharper they feel—that their memory lapses and difficulty concentrating weren’t due to just menopause or aging,” adds Dr. Gupta. **R**

7 CANCER WARNING SIGNS THAT ARE EASY TO IGNORE

Doctors will diagnose an estimated 1.6 million new cases of cancer this year. More malignancies are detected early, thanks to advances in screening and diagnosis, but initial symptoms can be subtle enough to overlook.

1. Unintentional weight loss. If you've lost more than ten pounds with no diet or exercise changes, get it checked out, says Richard Wender, MD, chief cancer control officer at the American Cancer Society. This happens most often with pancreatic, stomach, esophageal, or lung cancer.

2. Fatigue. "This means being more tired than what you'd expect for what's going on in your life," says Dale Shepard, MD, a Cleveland Clinic oncologist. If you're under short-term stress, feeling more tired than normal is understandable, but if you're struggling to get through work or can't make it through every day without a nap, that's a warning sign. Fatigue can indi-

cate some colon and stomach cancers as well as certain blood cancers like leukemia.

3. Unexplained bleeding. Anything strange—coughing up blood (lung cancer), unusual vaginal bleeding (cervical or endometrial cancer), blood in stool (colon or rectal cancer), blood in urine (bladder or kidney cancer), or bloody nipple discharge (breast cancer)—should be brought to your doc's attention.

4. Pain. Pain owing to cancer usually means the disease has already spread and become advanced, but it can be an early symptom of bone or testicular cancer.

5. Sores or bug bites that don't heal. They may be early-stage skin cancers. A long-

lasting sore in your mouth could be oral cancer. A sore on your penis or vagina could indicate penile, vaginal, or vulvar cancer.

6. Nagging cough. Coughs don't usually mean cancer, but if you develop a cough that won't disappear, even though you've never had allergies, asthma, or sinus problems, take note. It could be lung cancer or, if accompanied by hoarseness, cancer of the larynx or thyroid.

7. Bowel or bladder changes. Peeing more or less than usual could indicate bladder or prostate cancer. Constipation or diarrhea may signal colon or ovarian cancer. You may attribute gassiness or bloating to diet, but talk to your doctor if it lasts more than a week.

Laughter

THE BEST MEDICINE



The first art gallery opening

I WENT TO A KARAOKE BAR last night. At first I was afraid. Oh, I was petrified. *Comedian STEWART FRANCIS*

ONE SUNDAY MORNING, a preacher told his congregation, "Everyone who wants to go to heaven, come down to the front!" The whole church came forward except one man. Thinking that maybe the man hadn't heard him, the preacher

repeated the invitation. Again, the man just sat there.

"Sir," said the preacher, "don't you want to go to heaven when you die?"

The man replied, "Oh, when I die! I thought you were getting a group ready to go right now."

WHEN MY BOYFRIEND plays fantasy football, I play fantasy new boyfriend.

@BECCA_KOHLER

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S TO-DO LIST

1. Lightning rod
2. Heating stove made out of iron
3. Shoes that help me swim like a fishy
4. Get my GED
5. Some kind of musical instrument. Glass drum? Glass guitar?
6. Glasses that can be worn for near and far
7. GO SKYDIVING!!!
8. A place to share books and all kinds of other stuff
9. Fire-putting-outer organization thing
10. A new nation
11. Prove lightning/electricity during storm with key, Hula-Hoop, and/or kite
12. Live in France
13. Internet

SEAN CULLEN, mcsweeneys.net

THE IRS COMBINES two of the things we hate most in life: someone taking our money and math.

Comedian JOHN OLIVER

A LITTLE BOY ASKS his dad, "Where does poo come from?"

His father is taken aback by the question but decides to give his son the facts straight up.

"Well, son," he says, "food passes down the esophagus by peristalsis. It enters the stomach, where digestive enzymes induce a probiotic reaction in the alimentary canal. This extracts the protein before waste product enters the colon. Water is

absorbed, whereupon it then enters the rectum finally to emerge as poo."

"Wow," says the boy. "So where does Tigger come from?"

Submitted by JAKE COOPER,
London, England



THAT SOUNDS FAMILIAR!

The latest book from Reader's Digest proves that there's a fine line between the news and our favorite gags.

From the news:

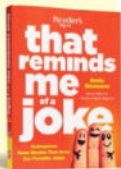
When a seven-year-old girl called 911 and then hung up, the Burnett, Wisconsin, police were dispatched to her home. When cops arrived, they discovered the problem: The girl's grandfather was cheating in a game of cards.

That reminds me of a joke:

My grandfather always said, "Don't watch your money; watch your health." So one day while I was watching my health, someone stole my money. It was my grandfather.

JACKIE MASON

From *That Reminds Me of a Joke*,
by Andy Simmons
(Reader's Digest Books)



Are you reminded of a funny joke or list?
It could be worth \$\$\$\$. See page 7 for
details, or go to rd.com/submit.

Unprepared

Rob Lowe on Sending His Son Off to College

FROM THE BOOK *LOVE LIFE*

TODAY IS MY SON Matthew's last night at home before college.

I have been emotionally blindsided. I know that this is good news. Matthew will go to a great school, something we as a family have worked hard at for years. I know that this is his finest hour. But looking at the suitcases on his bed and at his dog watching him pack sends me out of the room to a hidden corner where I can't stop crying.

Through the grief, I feel a rising embarrassment. "Pull yourself together!" I tell myself. There are parents sending their kids off to battle zones or putting them into rehab programs. How dare I feel so shattered?

One of the great gifts of my life has been having my boys, Matthew and Johnowen, and through them, exploring the mysterious, complicated, and charged bond between fathers and sons. As my wife, Sheryl, and I raised them, I have discovered the depth of

our relationship and the love and loss that flowed between my father and me. After my parents' divorce, when I was four, I spent weekends with my dad in Ohio. By the time Sunday rolled around, I was incapable of enjoying the day's activities because I



The actor with his favorite Patriots fan

was already dreading the inevitable goodbye of the evening.

Now, standing among Matthew's accumulation of possessions, I realize it's me who has become a boy again. All my heavy-chested sadness, loss, and longing to hold on to things as they used to be are back, sweeping over me as they did when I was a child.

In front of Sheryl and Matthew, I'm doing some of the best acting of my career. I smile like a jack-o'-lantern and affect a breezy, casual manner—positive sentences only and nothing

but enthusiasm framing my answers to Matthew's questions.

"Do you think it's cold in the dorms in the winter?" he asks in a voice that seems smaller than it was days ago.

"Nah!" I lie, having no idea what his new room for the next four years will be like. This line of questioning is irrelevant, anyway, since Sheryl is preparing for any possible scenario, as is her genius. Among her strengths is the ability to put anything a human being could possibly need into a suitcase. Or a box. Or a FedEx container.

Matthew's dog, Buster, watches me incredulously as his owner sorts through his winter jackets. Buster seems to be the only member of our family to see what a wreck I am.

"You disgust me," he seems to say, looking at me with his chocolate eyes. "Get a backbone, man!"



I WHISPERED TO HIM
IN THE DELIVERY
ROOM: "HELLO. I'M
YOUR DADDY. AND
I WILL ALWAYS BE
THERE FOR YOU."

The clothes are off the bed and zipped into the bags. His bed is tidy and spare; it already has the feel of a guest bed. In my mind I replay wrapping him in his favorite blanket like a burrito. That was our nightly ritual until one evening he said, "Daddy, I don't think I need blanky tonight."

I think of all the times we lay among the covers reading, first me to him, *Goodnight Moon* and *The Giving Tree*, and later him to me: my lines from *The West Wing* or a movie I was shooting. The countless hours of the History Channel and *Deadliest Catch*. I look at the bed and think of all the recent times I was annoyed at how late he was sleeping. I'll never have to worry about that again, I realize.

For his part, Matthew has been a

rock. He is naturally very even-keeled, rarely emotional; he is a logical, tough pragmatist. True to form, he is treating his impending departure as just another day at the office. And I'm glad. After all, someone's gotta be strong.

Our younger son, Johnowen, will be staying behind and returning to high school, and now it's time for them to say goodbye. I've been worried about how Johnowen will handle the departure of his big brother. Only two years apart, they share most of the same friends, which is to say that Johnny hangs with all the older boys who are also leaving home. My sons are very close in that vaguely annoyed constant companionship that brothers can share (if they are lucky).

In the driveway, Matthew gives Johnowen a laconic high five. "Peace," Matthew says, clearly going out of his way to avoid any emotion or drama. Johnowen, whose passion runs just barely under the surface, is a little taken aback. He looks at me, sad and bemused, and I know what he is thinking: "That's my brother! A cool cucumber till the end." He watches Matthew hop into the car for the ride to the airport.

On the plane, we have two seats together and one apart. Matthew chooses to sit with Sheryl, and I see how happy it makes her. Then on go the headphones, and not a word is shared for most of the flight. Sheryl and I look at each other and smile. "Teenagers."

An amber evening light fills the cabin as we flee the setting sun, heading east. I've taken a break from reading and am staring at my boy. The light from his window is cutting across his face, accentuating his cheekbones and strong jawline, making him look unbearably handsome and grown-up. He might as well be a young businessman headed to a meeting.

I remember the first time I laid eyes on him in the delivery room. "He's blond!" was my first thought. And I remember what I whispered to him when his eyes opened for the first time: "Hello. I'm your daddy. And I will always be there for you."

Sheryl has looked up from her iPad and mouths to me, "Are you OK?" I want to be, for her. But something about her face and the way she is looking at me while I am looking at him pulls the rug out again, and I avert my eyes from her, from him.

Just as we land, I take one more peek at Matthew. If he has any emotion about any of this, he is not showing it. I'm proud that he is charging into the first chapter of his adult life with such confidence.

We drive onto the historic, grand, and beautifully intimidating campus with our rental car packed with Matthew's belongings. Stuck in a line of cars, I am cursed again with idle time to contemplate the day ahead of me. But today, for the first time, the overpowering melancholy is gone, the bittersweet nostalgia, too, replaced by an

envious, excited adrenaline. To be at the true beginning! To be moments away from meeting strangers, some of whom will change your life forever! To have the opportunity to discover yourself, your true adult self, away from any of the tentacles of childhood!

I DIDN'T GO TO COLLEGE. At 17, I left home to go on location for my first movie. The first private space of my own wasn't a dorm room; it was a hotel room in Tulsa, Oklahoma. I didn't have to navigate a brand-new, totally foreign ecosystem of fellow students and faculty; I was thrown unceremoniously into a strange group of actors and crew members. For the first time that I can think of, I have no personal life experience to draw from to guide my son. My first and only college experience will be through him.

While we unload in front of the Gothic-style dorm, the welcoming upperclassmen do crazy, exuberant dances as they grab boxes to help. Matthew and I leave Sheryl to handle her masterwork in his room. I will handle other issues: finding the best pizza and a gym where he can continue jujitsu, purchasing a bicycle and discovering where to stash it.

I'm surprised at how little we say to each other and how good that feels. I think it's a result of years spent in each other's company. Not just dinner or good-nights or drop-offs; it was time coaching his teams, being in the

stands, on fishing boats, in the water surfing or diving, watching stupid television, standing up to teachers, parents, other kids, or anyone who so much as thought about treating him badly.

We put in the time together; we built this thing we have of comfort and love. And now, as we both prepare to let



I CAN SEE THAT HIS
EYES ARE WELLING UP.
I WANT TO REACH
OUT AND HUG HIM,
BUT I DON'T. INSTEAD,
I LOOK HIM IN THE EYE.

go of each other, it is paying off. That evening, even though his dorm room is ready, he says, "Dad, I think I'll just stay with you and Mom tonight." I catch Sheryl's eye; this time, it's hers that are moist.

The next morning, after all the freshmen file out of the chapel after convocation, Matthew shows his first signs of uncertainty. The president's speech was an ode to them: "the most highly accomplished" class ever accepted in

"the most competitive year" in the school's history. It took this elegant ceremony among a sea of strangers for Matthew to realize the stakes.

"Dad, what if it's too hard for me here?" he asks me later, sitting on his foldout bed back at the hotel.

"You came from a very tough academic school with great grades. You took the tests, you got the scores, you did the hours, and you did the travel and extracurriculars. You made it happen. This won't be any different. This school chose you because they know you can succeed here."

"None of the other kids look scared at all," he says.

For the first time I can remember since he was a baby, I can see that his eyes are welling up. I want to reach out and hug him, but I don't. Instead, I look him in the eye.

"Never compare your insides to someone else's outsides."

He nods and turns away.

"I think I might take a nap."

"Sure, I'll wake you in a while," I say.

He curls up in a ball, like he used to. I unfold a blanket and cover him, tucking it underneath, rolling him in it, like a burrito. **R**

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36

Favorite Facts That Are False

Debunking the world's most
contagious myths and misconceptions

BY DAVID MCCANDLESS

FROM INFORMATIONISBEAUTIFUL.NET

BODY

FOOD

HISTORY

LAW

MIND

NATURE

RELIGION

SCIENCE



Bubble Size = Virulence of Idea (Google Hits)

DESIGN: PAULO ESTRIGA, TATJANA DUBOVINA, FABIO BERGAMASCHI
RESEARCH: JAMES KENNEDY, MIRIAM QUICK, ELLA HOLLOWOOD, PEARL DOUGHTY-WHITE
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Napoléon Was Short

A tall tale. At five six, he was slightly above average height for a Frenchman of the time.



Don't Eat and Swim

This doesn't increase the risk of cramps; alcohol is the biggest risk increaser. But a full stomach will make you short of breath.



Salty Water Boils Quicker

Adding a sprinkle of salt to water makes no difference. It can actually make boiling take longer.

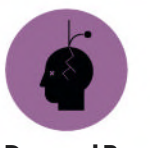


Oil Stops Stuck Pasta

Nope; it'll only make it greasy. Stirring prevents sticking.



Left and Right Brain There's no solid division between the talents of each hemisphere; the left brain can learn "right-brain skills" and vice versa.



Dropped Pennies Kill

Terminal velocity of a penny is 30 to 50 mph. Not fast enough to kill—but it sure would sting.



Three Wise Men

Nowhere in the Bible does it specify that there were three.



MSG = Headaches

There's no scientific proof—just anecdotal evidence implicating monosodium glutamate.



Dogs Sweat by Salivating

No—they regulate temperature through panting. They actually sweat through their footpads.



Great Wall of China

It's not visible from space. No single human structure is visible from orbit, but you can see cities at night.



Water Rotation A flushed toilet does not rotate the other way in the Southern Hemisphere. The Coriolis effect doesn't alter water in toilets.



Einstein Failed Math

Nope. He failed an entrance exam for a school but still excelled in math.

**Humans and Dinosaurs**

Despite 41% of U.S. adults thinking we coexisted, we actually missed each other by 64 million years.

**Black Holes**

Not really “holes,” but rather hugely dense objects with massive gravitational pull.

**We Have Only 5 Senses**

Some scientists insist on 21, including balance, pain, and temperature.

**Missing-Persons Reports**

Police don't require a 24-hour waiting period before accepting a missing-persons report.

**Different Tongue Parts**

There are not different sections of the tongue for each taste: bitter, sour, salty, sweet, and umami (savory/meaty).

**Only 10% of the Brain Is Used**

The proportion of the brain “firing” at any one time is task dependent, but ultimately, every region is used almost every day.

**Bananas Grow on Trees**

Actually, they grow on massive herbs that just resemble trees.

**Milk Increases Mucus**

Nope; it doesn't. There's no need to avoid dairy if you have a cold.

**Bats Are Blind**

Not only can bats see, but they also use echolocation. That's why they're so awesome!

**7 Years to Digest Gum**

The chewy base of gum is indigestible and passes straight through. The remainder is absorbed.

**Vikings' Horns**

The helmets were created by a costume designer for a 19th-century Wagner opera.

**Alcohol Keeps You Warm**

It merely dilates warm blood vessels near the skin, creating the impression of warmth. It can actually drop core body temperature.



Vaccines Cause Autism

Groundless fears based on fraudulent research that's been shown to have been manipulated.



Don't Touch Baby Birds

Most birds have a limited sense of smell, so they won't abandon babies who "smell" of humans.



Alcohol Kills Brain Cells

Even in heavy users and alcoholics, brain cells aren't killed, only damaged.



Iron Maidens

These were never medieval torture devices, but 18th-century fakes were created for sensational circuses.



Body Heat and the Head

Only in infants is most heat lost through the head (unless the head is the only uncovered part of the body).



Wake Sleepwalkers?

They'll be really confused, but it's OK. They're more likely to hurt themselves if they're not awoken.



Caffeine Dehydrates You

Not really. The diuretic effect of caffeine is offset by the amount of water in a caffeinated drink.



Goldfish's 3-Second Memory

While not the smartest creatures, goldfish boast a memory span of three months.



Shaving Thickens Hair

Regrown hair isn't thicker, coarser, or darker; it just appears so because it grows back with a blunt tip.



The Vomitorium

Not a room Romans used for Bacchanalian binges, but the name for the entrance to a stadium.



Sugar = Hyperactivity

Studies have disproved this. Poor or rowdy behaviors still occur in children with sugar-free diets.



Bulls Hate Red

Bulls are color-blind. They actually perceive the motions of the bullfighter's cloth as a threat.



A cautionary tale about how one woman got taken—and how you can avoid being next

“SHE STOLE MY LIFE!”

BY DOUG SHADEL FROM AARP THE MAGAZINE

RETIRED NURSE HELEN ANDERSON* was an irresistible mark. To an identity thief like Alice Lipski, this was a woman from another time and place, with little Internet access and paper bank statements that were sent to her unlocked mailbox. Becoming Anderson was a cinch. So Lipski went to Macy's and treated herself to a shopping spree, courtesy of the retiree. She roved the Seattle store, charging clothes at three registers.

But when Lipski exited, she made a mistake. She left behind, on a chair where it sat like a time bomb, her purse. Inside were the tools of her trade: a computer and ten driver's licenses in nine names but each with Lipski's face.

There is an Alice Lipski in almost every city and town. Some 16.6 million people in the United States were victims of identity theft in 2012, according to the Department of Justice, with losses totaling \$24.7 billion, and the number of victims appears to be rising. Older people are particularly attractive targets. Compared with the young, they tend to have better credit and more accounts. Technology has made it easier for criminals to utilize the elderly's personal and financial data. Older adults

**Names of victim and perpetrators have been changed.*

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are also less likely to have online access to their bank and credit card accounts, so they're not monitoring their activity so closely.

Most methods of identity theft fall into one of two categories: low tech and high tech, according to Melinda Young, a King County prosecuting attorney who supervised the case against Lipski. "High-tech thieves are more tied to organized crime and do the sophisticated breaches," Young says. Those are the headline-making crimes like the Target hack in November 2013, when thieves stole some 40 million credit card numbers. Al Pascual, a senior research analyst for Javelin Strategy & Research, says hackers have gotten better at capitalizing on these security breaches. In 2010, one in nine consumers who received breach notifications became a fraud victim, and "by 2014," Pascual says, "it was one in eight." Meanwhile, low-tech thieves "steal mail and burglarize cars and houses to get information," Young explains.

But what if the thief is both: a street criminal who also has the digital smarts of a hacker? In the fall of 2012, 64-year-old Helen Anderson was about to find out.

Retirement for her came suddenly. For most of her adult life, she worked in the OR at a Seattle hospital. Like many nurses, she developed back problems. One day in 2011, her legs hurt; by evening, she couldn't walk. She had back surgery, which restored

her mobility, but she was unable to return to work.

Luckily, Anderson had planned well. She had good credit, paid her bills on time, and owned her home. When she retired, her daughter, who lived in Portland, Oregon, was having health problems. Anderson went to Portland in August to help, letting her niece, Samantha, house-sit. Anderson's only condition: Don't let anyone stay with you.

When Anderson returned in October, she was surprised to discover a woman named Alice Lipski there. Alice, her niece explained, was a friend. She'd had a fight with her boyfriend and needed a place to live. Samantha had let her stay for a few days. Anderson told Samantha that Lipski had to be out by the end of the week.

MAILBOXING IS LIKE hunting for gold but far easier—and Lipski and her crew were pros at it. Most people don't lock their mailboxes, so crooks just pull out the treasure: bank statements, credit card offers, and credit union applications. January, when people receive W-2 tax forms, is prime hunting season. The team also broke into cars, like the ones sitting in the long-term lot at the train station or the vehicles in a gym parking lot, because people frequently left their wallets in them during workouts.

The average car is full of useful stuff. Those gas station and ATM receipts?

They may have partial account numbers and bank names. Of course, if a driver kept a vehicle registration in the car, the thieves could instantly learn their mark's name and address—two pieces of the puzzle. Then they'd hit the person's home mailbox until they had everything they needed.

Next they'd counterfeit IDs. Dino, a member of Lipski's crew, was the artist who made them. Their friend Brian was security; he rigged an encrypted server to store their stolen data. Lipski was the face of the operation, a pretty, well-spoken woman who could stride into a bank without raising eyebrows. She could present a bogus driver's license and walk out with hundreds of dollars. But there was a fourth member of the crew.

Lipski was first given methamphetamines in 1996 at 17. Her parents split soon after she was born; her dad raised her. Lipski saw her birth mother in the summer. On one visit, her mother's friend passed her a meth pipe. She inhaled, and like her mom, she became an addict.

Law enforcement officials have long known about the link between meth addicts and ID theft. Some experts say that half or more of the identity thieves who get prosecuted are addicts. Tweakers—slang for users—can stay awake for days at a time, thinking up ways to get more money for drugs.

At first, Lipski wasn't involved in

fraud. But everyone in her crowd of users was doing it. She'd watch and offer ideas. "Once I found out I was good at this, it was on," she says. Then she met Dino, the fake-ID genius: "He and I would sit around getting high and brainstorming. Together, we were a complete fraud nightmare."

"I KNEW EVERYTHING ABOUT HER," SAYS LIPSKI. "AND WHAT I DIDN'T KNOW, I CHANGED TO WHAT I WANTED IT TO BE."

Lipski had established a network of runners when she used to deal meth. After getting into identity theft, she'd send them to steal mail and break into cars. Lipski would take information from the runners and hit the Web to find birthdays, family names, and past addresses. Armed with a dossier of likely passwords and personal data, she'd set up new accounts and profiles.

She loved beating the system. "These are billion-dollar companies with huge security features," she says, "and I was able to get through them. It's a huge ego boost." And, she reasoned, she wasn't hurting anyone. The strangers whose names and accounts she stole were covered; the banks and credit card companies were the ones on the hook for losses.

When Samantha let Lipski stay at

her aunt's home in 2012, Lipski was primed to take advantage of the situation. The house was full of receipts and mail—an ID thief's paradise.

THE MANAGER OF Anderson's credit union called her on Thursday, October 25, shortly after she'd returned from Portland. Her account was overdrawn—someone had charged \$300 on a new debit card, one that Anderson had never used.

On Monday, Anderson went to the credit union office to fill out a fraud affidavit. The money was restored, and the problem was settled. A few days later, a call came from Wells Fargo. Had she just made \$5,000 in charges on a credit card? The card was recently activated, and an initial balance had been paid with a credit union check to boost the spending limit.

Anderson returned to the credit union. While looking at her account, the manager asked, "Did you pay \$500 from this checking account toward your American Express bill online?" No—she never paid bills online.

A few miles away, Alice Lipski was taking over Anderson's identity. She signed Anderson up for a credit-monitoring service that was designed to protect customers from identity theft. Instead, it exposed her full credit history. The report revealed a mother lode of old accounts; over her life, Anderson had acquired dozens of cards from stores and banks. Most were inactive. Lipski reported those as lost

or stolen, so the companies assigned new numbers with new usernames, passwords, and security questions that only Lipski knew, locking Anderson out of the accounts. "I knew everything about her," Lipski says. "And what I didn't know, I changed to what I wanted it to be." She ordered Anderson's mail forwarded to Lipski's boyfriend's house, then to a post office box. Since Anderson still received junk mail, it took weeks for her to notice that checks and bills had stopped coming.

Anderson got more calls from credit card companies about suspicious transactions—casino bills, charges for new tires, fancy wheel covers, gas, food, clothes. In six months, more than \$30,000 was spent in her name.

Anderson felt like a foreigner moored in a country whose language and customs she couldn't decipher: "I would call a card company. They'd ask for the account number and password, and I couldn't give them either one." All she could do was go to the banks and stores in person and show their employees her driver's license to prove who she was. She'd cancel the cards. Then, a fresh wave of attacks.

HERE'S ONE THING you learn only after identity theft happens to you: You vanish. So thorough was Lipski's intrusion that Anderson found herself arguing with bank officers over personal details like her old jobs, addresses, and mother's maiden name. "I couldn't prove who I

was, because she could prove it easier than I could," she says. "I felt like I was a nonhuman being."

Armed with Anderson's Social Security number—obtained from a Medicare card that Lipski had intercepted—and a fake driver's license, Lipski walked into stores and convinced cashiers to let her charge merchandise on Anderson's accounts. To keep the accounts from getting maxed out, Lipski wrote checks stolen from other victims. She'd pay down the balances and use the cards until the bank discovered the checks were bad.

In February, Lipski's attacks escalated. Her boyfriend got picked up

with a loaded gun at a convenience store. The cops searched his car and found drugs. Lipski needed \$10,000 for bail. She found it via a loophole in the security procedures at Anderson's credit union, and she raided other victims. As collateral, Lipski pledged the equity in Anderson's home.

Anderson had no idea, until she got an angry call from a bail bond company. She despaired of escaping the ordeal. "I wanted to go to sleep and not wake up, because I was so tired of it never ending, and I didn't know what to do," she says.

By April, Lipski's life was unraveling too. She'd broken up with her



HOW TO AVOID BEING A VICTIM

- Lock your mailbox: Nearly 60 percent of Americans don't use a mailbox that locks.
- Limit the personal information you get in the mail by opening online accounts for your bank and credit cards: Forty-two percent of Americans over 50 don't have online access to all their accounts.
- Monitor your credit. Consumers can receive a free report every year from each of the three credit agencies. Request a report from a different agency every four months.
- Take note of any inactive credit card accounts you have and close them.
- If you're thinking about purchasing coverage from an identity protection service, go to idtheftinfo.org, run by the Consumer Federation of America, to find out what protection you need and how much it should cost. And ask whether your insurance company, bank, or employer offers a free or low-cost service of its own.

boyfriend and fallen out with Dino and Brian, leaving her on her own. But she had one victim whom she could still burn: Helen Anderson. So Lipski went to Macy's. It wasn't until she returned home that she realized she'd forgotten her handbag.

"That's meth right there," Lipski says. "It gives you the self-confidence to walk into a public place, charge \$2,000 posing as someone else, and leave a purse behind with everything the police need to convict you."

Lipski went to Macy's the next morning, but security had found the fake IDs. She fled before cops arrived. Six weeks later, detectives finally caught up to her. She was charged with ten counts of identity theft. She and her accomplices had stolen nearly \$1 million by using the information of Helen Anderson and dozens of other victims.

WHEN ANDERSON WENT to Lipski's sentencing hearing in December 2013, she didn't see the attractive woman she'd found in her home in October 2012. Lipski was now disheveled, with dirty hair. In her orange jumpsuit, she stared at the judge, never making eye contact with Anderson.

Prosecutors asked Anderson if she was aware of the plea deal they had struck: Lipski pleaded guilty to seven felony counts of identity theft and agreed to enter a residential drug-treatment program. If she stayed

clean and didn't re-offend, she would not have to serve more than the nine months of jail time she'd done.

In one way, Anderson was lucky. Only a tiny percentage of identity theft cases are successfully prosecuted. After she saw her tormentor, her anger softened. Lipski, she learned, had a young son. She was an addict whose mother had struggled with addiction. "If she can go to rehab, get off drugs, and make a life for herself in an honest way, then that's what I hope for her," says Anderson.

Today, Alice Lipski is working at a restaurant, and she is tested for drugs weekly. "I don't know exactly what's in store for me," she says. "I need to give myself the opportunity to find out what I can do when I'm not doing something bad."

Anderson's stolen funds were restored, but, as she and many victims report, the real damage is psychological: the sense of violation, the knowledge that your personal details were compromised. After the attacks, Anderson sold her house and moved in with her mother. Striving to repair her credit, she's been stymied by the paperwork. As for the possibility of being the victim of future fraud, Anderson is fatalistic. "My information is out there," she says. **R**

Doug Shadel is the AARP state director in Washington and a founder of the Fraud Watch Network, a group of more than 700,000 citizens fighting fraud in their neighborhoods.

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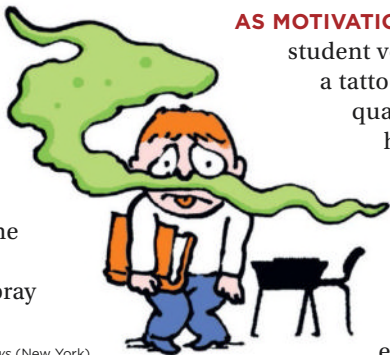
That's Outrageous!

BACK TO SCHOOL

TEN NEW YORK

City students were rushed to a hospital after they were overcome by a noxious smell. Emergency crews quickly discovered the cause: Someone had released Axe body spray in the classroom.

Source: [Daily News \(New York\)](#)



AS MOTIVATION, a British

student vowed he would get a tattoo of a problematic quadratic equation on his butt should he fail his math exam for the third year in a row. Here's the CliffsNotes version of what ensued: The student

now has a tattoo of

a problematic quadratic equation on his butt.

Source: [mirror.co.uk](#)

FIREFIGHTERS IN OTTAWA,

Canada, had to use the Jaws of Life to free a student. Was she trapped in a car following a terrible accident? No, she was wedged into her school locker after backing into it as a prank. Now she knows how her books feel.

Source: [thevictorylapblog.com](#)

A HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL in Long Island, New York, has been accused of plagiarizing his yearbook letter to students. The text is nearly identical to that written by a principal in Albany, California. A clue that something was amiss with the Long Island principal's missive came at the end, when he congratulated the graduating class of "Albany High School!"

Source: [longisland.news12.com](#)

FIRST THE GOOD NEWS:

Everyone in one Tampa Bay, Florida, school was talking about literacy. Now the bad news: That's because a sign promoting a literacy program was spelled "Laeping to Literacy Night." Here are more school marquee's everyone couldn't help noticing:

- "Welcome to All STDS & Parents"
- "The Dictionary Is the Only Place Where Success Comes Before Hard Work"
- "Bring On the Test. We except the Challenge!"
- "Exerise Your Mind and Read"

Source: [huffingtonpost.com](#)

PHOTO

OF LASTING
INTEREST





**Photograph by
Thomas D. Mangelsen**

**Chosen by
MaryAnne Golon,**

*director of photography at the
Washington Post*

"My photography collection consists primarily of black-and-white prints of dark subjects like war, famine, poverty, and neglect. For some visual relief, I approached Tom Mangelsen years ago to buy one of his images. When I chose this photo of a silverback gorilla running through the green mountains of Rwanda, he laughed and said, 'Of all the photographs in my gallery, you have selected the only war picture!' The silverback is charging a younger male who had shown interest in one of the females. I still find this image soothing."

Life's tangles are
no match for radio
personality Garrison
Keillor's relationship



Improve Your Marriage *(In Just One Day)*

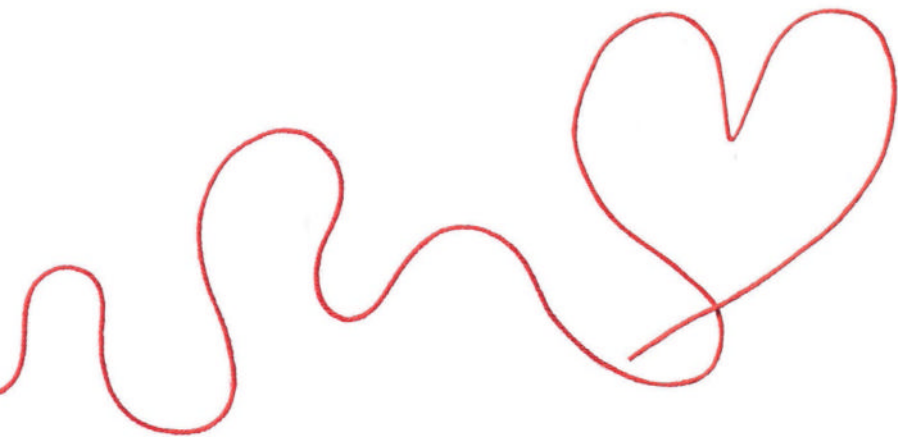
FROM A PRAIRIE HOME COMPANION

EVERY MARRIAGE has its ups and downs. There are the days when you look at your spouse and hear choirs humming hallelujahs, and there are the days when you wonder, “Who are you, and what is your stuff doing in my house?” Those are the days when you play golf. Fishing works, too, or writing sonnets or digging post holes. It keeps the two of you apart for a few hours, and usually that’s all you need.

I have an after-dinner speech about marriage that is about 15 minutes long and somewhat funny. (“The rules for marriage are the same as for

a lifeboat. No sudden moves, don’t crowd the other person, and keep all disastrous thoughts to yourself.”) As a thrice-married guy, I feel an obligation to share such insights.

So I found myself in a cab to LaGuardia to catch a plane to Atlanta to give the speech. (I was in New York to speak at the Edith Wharton Society, but not about marriage, since she had a miserable one.) The cab stops at the tollbooth on the Triborough Bridge, and I hand the cabbie a \$5 bill for the toll, but he waves it away and gives the man in the booth



a \$50 bill, which turns out to be counterfeit. “Not just counterfeit,” the toll taker says. “It’s lousy counterfeit.” The \$50 bill is confiscated, forms are filled out, I pay the toll, and we get to LaGuardia 30 minutes before flight time. I give the driver \$25 for a \$23.75 fare, and he yells, “Why take it out on me?” Because you knew the bill was counterfeit—that’s why. I’m no rube. I didn’t just fall off the cabbage wagon.

I dash to the plane. I am speaking at a benefit luncheon, and I dislike benefits because you have to endure other people’s gratitude, which can be exhausting. This sounds ungracious, but it’s true. You go speak for free to a banquet of the Episcopal Promise Keepers of Poughkeepsie or the Honorary Society of Menomonie

Economists or the Scandinavian Skin-Diving School in Schenectady, and 30 people tell you what a wonderful thing you’re doing, and it wears you out. If one person would tell you a joke instead, you would throw your arms around him or her in gratitude.

I get on the plane, and I’m in seat 8D on one of those toy jets that air-

lines have introduced that are designed for groups of fourth graders. The seats are hard on the vertically gifted such as myself, so that when the man in 7D reclines his seat, it almost kills me. If Abraham Lincoln were sitting in 8D, he would give up on that “malice toward none” concept and club 7D on the top of his little bald head. But I bite my tongue, and I also do not shoot my neighbor in 8C, a pig-gish fellow in an expensive



GARRISON KEILLOR
*hosts A Prairie
Home Companion
on Minnesota
Public Radio.
He and his wife,
Jenny Lind Nilsson,
live in St. Paul,
Minnesota.*

sweater and tasseled shoes, snarfling his lunch while poring over the *Wall Street Journal* and poking me with his elbow as he eats. I come from a part of America where people apologize if they poke you and make sure not to do it again. He comes from a part of America where you push your way up to the trough and elbow people out of the way.

The benefit luncheon in Atlanta is not a happy time. It is an organization of Very Rich People Helping Wretched People Without Having to Be in the Same Room with Them, and it's full of alpha males of the sort you see strutting around airports with cell phones clipped to their ears hollering at somebody in Cincinnati and gushy women who tell you they adore your

TV show and never miss it on Sunday night, even though it's radio and it's on Saturday. I give my 15-minute speech, which suddenly isn't amusing at all, and the president of Very Rich People gives me, in gratitude for my generosity,

a hideous Lucite plaque, which I deposit in a trash bin at the airport, and I fly home to Minnesota, and there is my elegant wife waiting at the curb in her car.

It is good to see her. We've been married ten years, and surely we have problems, but at the moment, I cannot think of a single one. We

drive through the streets of St. Paul, and there is no place I would rather be. Misery is the secret of happiness in marriage. Go make yourself miserable, and then come home. **R**

“
My wife and I surely have problems, but at the moment, I cannot think of a single one.

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SHOWER AND TELL

The shortest distance measurable to science is between “ice-cold” and “scalding hot” on your parents’ guest-bathroom shower.

🐦 @KENJENNINGS

2-in-1 shampoo is so bad, it should be called 0 for 2.

🐦 @EMMYBLOTNICK

How about soap that's just soap scented? I don't need to get hungry every time I wash my hands.

🐦 @GUYENDOREKAISER

Approved Use

Lopressor® (metoprolol tartrate) tablets can be used to treat:

- high blood pressure
- long-term chest pain
- acute heart attack

Important Safety Information

Do Not Use:

- To treat high blood pressure and chest pain if you also have low heart rhythm, slow heart rate, heart block, sudden heart attack, or obvious heart failure
- If you have an allergy to Lopressor or any of its ingredients
- If you have disorders caused by plaque build-up in your arteries such as PAD
- If you have skipped heart beats or an inability of the heart to pump blood to the rest of the body
- If you have consistent low blood pressure
- If you have moderate-to-severe cardiac failure

Risk of Severe Allergic Reaction:

May require higher than usual doses of epinephrine therapy

The Most Common Side Effects: Low blood pressure, chest pain, tiredness, dizziness, shortness of breath or slow heart beat, wheezing, diarrhea, rash

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or 1-800-FDA-1088

Please see next page for the Brief Summary of the Product Information

BRAND NAME LOPRESSOR® (metoprolol tartrate) IS BACK!!

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help in obtaining Lopressor.

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*Tablets are not shown actual size.

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SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ABOUT LOPRESSOR® (metoprolol tartrate) Tablets

What is this drug used for:

- Lopressor® (metoprolol tartrate) tablets are used for the treatment of high blood pressure, either alone or in combination with other treatments for high blood pressure.
- Lopressor is also used in the long-term treatment of chest pain, and in the treatment of definite or suspected heart attack.

Do not use Lopressor: If you are using Lopressor for the treatment of high blood pressure and chest pain, do not use Lopressor if you also have low heart rhythm, slow heart rate, heart block, sudden heart attack, or obvious heart failure.

Do not use if you have:

- An allergy to Lopressor, any of its ingredients, or any allergies to other beta blockers
- Severe disorders caused by plaque build-up in your arteries, such as Peripheral Artery Disease
- Consistent low blood pressure
- Moderate-to-severe heart failure or congestive heart failure

If you are using Lopressor for the treatment of definite or suspected heart attack, do not use Lopressor if you also have slow heart beat or abnormal heart beat (such as skipped or irregular heart beat), or an inability of the heart to pump blood to the rest of the body

Warnings: Lopressor may have different effects depending on your condition being treated.

Heart Failure: Lopressor may cause heart failure and the inability of the heart to pump blood correctly. If this occurs, it may

be necessary to lower the dose of Lopressor or discontinue therapy.

Reduced Blood Supply to Heart: Lopressor should not be abruptly discontinued if you have damaged blood vessels due to coronary artery disease; Lopressor dosage should be gradually reduced over a period of 1-2 weeks, and may be prescribed again if chest pains or heart failure develop.

Slow Heart Beat: Heart block and heart attack can occur with the use of Lopressor.

Use During Major Surgery: If Lopressor is administered frequently it should not be withdrawn prior to major surgery.

Increased Asthma and COPD: If you have asthma, COPD, or other breathing problems, Lopressor should only be used if you do not respond to other treatments.

Diabetes and Hypoglycemia: Beta blockers may mask abnormally rapid heart rate that may occur with diabetes or low blood sugar.

Adrenal Tumor: If you have a type of adrenal tumor known as a pheochromocytoma, Lopressor should be given in combination with an alpha blocker, and only after the alpha blocker has been initiated.

Overactive Thyroid: Lopressor may mask signs of an overactive thyroid.

Risk of Severe Allergic Reaction: If you have a history of severe allergic reactions, you may have a severe allergic reaction to Lopressor and may need higher-than-normal doses of epinephrine therapy.

Ask a healthcare provider before you use Lopressor if you are pregnant, nursing, or seeking to become pregnant.

Lopressor has been approved for adult use only.

Ask a health care provider before use if you are on any other prescription drugs. Lopressor may cause interactions with the following drugs:

- Catecholamine-depleting drugs
- Hydralazine
- Digitalis glycosides and beta blockers
- Alpha-adrenergic agents
- Calcium channel blockers
- Ergot alkaloid
- CYP2D6 inhibitors
- Dipyridamole

When using this product for high blood pressure or chest pain you may have:

Tiredness, dizziness and depression, diarrhea, rash, shortness of breath, or slow heart rate.

When using this product for treatment of definite or suspected heart attack you may have:

Heart failure, low blood pressure, slow heart rate, or slow or irregular heart beat. *The risk information provided here is not comprehensive. To learn more, talk about Lopressor with your healthcare provider or pharmacist.*

How to get more information:

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Laugh Lines

CLASS CLOWNS

I want to take one of those English as a second language courses—just go in and blow everybody away on the first day.

CRAIG ANTON

Nothing I learned in school prepared me for life. My first book should have read, “See Dick balance his checkbook. See Jane leave an unhealthy relationship. Run, Jane, run!”

KATE MASON

[I enrolled in] a private-detective school online, and I paid online. But then I never heard from them again. I thought, Either I got ripped off, or this is my first case.

MIKE VECCHIONE

As long as there is algebra, there will be prayer in school.

LARRY MILLER

I’ve never been good with math, but I accepted it from an early age. My teacher would hand me a math test, and I’d just write, “I’m going to marry someone who can do this.”

RITA RUDNER

I went to the 30th reunion of my preschool. I didn’t want to go, because I’ve put on, like, 100 pounds.

WENDY LIEBMAN



Who was the person who'd marked up my library book? I had to know.

The Plot Thickens

BY GARY SOTO FROM THE BOOK *WHY I DON'T WRITE CHILDREN'S LITERATURE*

USE THE PUBLIC LIBRARY weekly and, when I return home, stash my haul on a bookshelf. On the shelf at this moment are several histories, a gardening book, and Ian McEwan's *The Child in Time*, a novel about the abduction of a three-year-old girl and the unraveling of her parents' marriage—guilt, anger, grief, loneliness. I'm a quarter of the way through this tidy novel but may return it to the

library, unfinished. Words are underlined in pencil by one of the previous readers, who, I suspect, was trying to improve her vocabulary—*deciduous*, *reptilian*, *affability*, *provenance*, *slow loris*, *averse*, etc.

The underlined words have halted my progress and not because of annoyance. As a poet, invariably searching for the right words myself, I began to consider the author of these pencil strikes. I couldn't help wonder-





ing about this previous reader—the culprit, let’s say. She was female, near my age (early 60s), and reflective about the years lost on a no-good husband. Like the dainty pencil marks, she was understated in every way—touch, voice, makeup, and clothes. I began to imagine her as a reader of admirably crafted contemporary fiction (I still consider McEwan’s novel, published in 1987, “contemporary”). Perhaps a nurse attracted to the novel’s theme.

Or a psychologist—but no, that was wrong too. A psychologist would have known most of the underlined words, as would have a nurse. Maybe an inexperienced bookworm on her way to the morning shift by bus?

Who was she? I assigned her the details of a life story. A widow, she read the novel late at night, with cotton balls in her ears against the noisy neighbor above, while a moth batted around the lamp and a cat the color of

smoke slept at her feet. No—she was an office worker on her lunch hour in a park with graffiti-marked trees. A duck with a white ring around its neck was eyeballing her from three feet away. Did she have a crust of bread to quiet its quacking? But no, I was hasty: She was really a florist in rubber boots, her breath condensing in the cold, with a surplus of roses in tall buckets to sell by late afternoon.

Conjecture, all of it, but one fact remained: A reader had underlined words. In doing so, she had embraced the view that learning doesn't end. She might have been a mail carrier padding about in corrective shoes (this is how I saw her by page 180), but she was not about to give up on her head, now capped with grayish hair.

There are thousands of words we don't know, long or short, soft or clunky, seen in print or heard in conversation. We can just let them go, like passersby, and be none the worse because of it. But we can also give new words a try on their own. *Who is this person who looks like a dogmatic priest? What sort of fluctuating shopper is she? Where did they get that dubious car?* These adjectives may not quite fit the nouns, but the attempts are interesting. *Why don't*

we forge the refrigerator? Close but not quite.

In a recent novel, I paused at this sentence: “‘She’s fly,’ said Mathew to his best friend, Ronald.” *Fly?* I mouthed the word, quietly befuddled. Was this a typo? Did the author mean to say “She’s flying”?

That wasn’t probable, because the scenes in the novel were grounded—nothing about planes, terminals, check-in, and such. Failing to grasp the meaning, I asked a young man eating lunch on a bench, who said that *fly* meant “lovely” or “pretty” or “hot.” Then the young man put down

his sandwich and informed me that the word was like a BlackBerry—no longer in use.

Oh.

I might finish McEwan’s novel—it’s very good, after all. But as my eyes peruse his prose, I can’t help thinking of the previous reader—nurse, psychologist, florist, or mail carrier—as concocting a subplot, a sleuth with a pencil poised. With affability, she turned the reptilian page and, through reading glasses as thick as mine, made aversive check marks on her dubious self-improvement, while her cat and her stuffed slow loris watched with provenance from the end of a very comfy and deciduous bed. **R**

“
***She might
have been a
mail carrier
padding about
in corrective
shoes.***”

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INSURANCE ADVERTISEMENT

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All that stood between two American airmen and a raging

BY KENNETH MILLER

FOR TWO DAYS, Typhoon Neoguri had battered the Japanese island of Okinawa with 100 mph winds, uprooting trees and ripping wooden buildings from their foundations. On Kadena Air Base, the hub of U.S. air power in the Pacific, 20,000 residents—service members, families, and civilian employees—had been confined to quarters under an emergency order. By nightfall on July 8, 2014, however, the worst seemed to be over. At 10 p.m., when Airmen First Class Brandon Miles and Roderick Jones arrived for their shift at the munitions-dump guard shack, all that remained

of the tempest was the relentless rain.

As their ride dropped them off, Miles noticed that a small pond had collected in an underpass 200 yards away. “Bro, I bet that water’s going to be up to the shack by morning,” he said with a laugh. Jones agreed, adding, “Hopefully, not until we’re off duty.”

Inside the concrete shack, it was dry and snug. Jones—a husky, six-foot-two-inch 20-year-old from Houston—settled behind the single desk. Miles, 21, an Oklahoma City native who was four inches shorter and 50 pounds lighter, hunkered on a bench. Although both men wore the uniform of the security forces, the branch of the Air

GOING UNDER!

flood was a tiny cement shack—and time was running out



*Floodwater on Kadena
Air Base swelled to
over ten feet deep.*

Force responsible for law enforcement and base defense, their personalities were as different as their physiques. Jones was quiet, easygoing, and upbeat; Miles was outspoken, intense, and irascible. Jones loved to explore the local beaches and restaurants; Miles disliked swimming and was leery of foreign food. But they relished each other's company and had been close friends since basic training. In their free time, they often took long drives around the island. Jones let Miles—a former college DJ who played piano, trumpet, and drums—pick the tunes on the car stereo.

try,” he said to Jones. “You’re bigger.”

Jones threw his weight against the door, without success, as water began seeping across the threshold. Grabbing his two-way radio, he called the base defense operations center, half a mile away. “We’re in trouble,” he said. “We’re going to need somebody to come and get us.”

TSGT. KEVIN SPAIN took the call. “We’ll send someone out there as soon as we can,” he said, “but our patrols are tied up right now.” There was minor flooding all over the base, he explained, and the

Jones fired 15 shots from his pistol at the shack’s window.

Tonight, they spent the watch studying their workbooks for a career-development course and opening the entrance gate for the few vehicles that came through. At dawn, the rain was still sheeting. Glancing out the window, Miles grinned. “See? I told you,” he said. Several inches of water covered the pavement.

Around 6:30 in the morning, the men heard a metallic crashing sound, like a ship being battered by waves. Looking out, they saw that what had been a shallow pool was now a knee-deep, chocolate-colored torrent, carrying twigs and other debris and rising rapidly. Miles went to the door, but it wouldn’t budge; the pressure of the flood was too great. “You

security force’s vehicles were out trying to keep traffic moving. Spain, 31, tried to sound nonchalant, but the crew-cut father of three knew how treacherous a typhoon’s wake could be. He radioed an alert to his scattered troops and waited with growing anxiety as 15 minutes ticked by.

When a Humvee returned to headquarters, Spain gathered a few defenders (as security personnel are called) and jumped behind the wheel. The base’s perimeter road was impassable, so he navigated a muddy hillside, picking up his fellow flight chief—M.Sgt. Brad Reeves, who’d been trying to reach the shack on foot—along the way. Around seven, they arrived at the first of two gates separating the

main base from the munitions dump.

One of Kadena's fire trucks was already there. But the gate was locked, and no one had the key. To their horror, the defenders saw that the guard shack, down the hill, was almost submerged. Just then, a call came in from the operations center: The video screen monitoring the area had gone blank. Spain realized that water had engulfed the camera, which hung from the eaves of the shack. If the team couldn't get in quickly, it would be fishing out a couple of corpses.

While they waited for help, Miles and Jones switched off the shack's

They told each other jokes, not all of them printable. When a spider skittered across the surface, Jones flicked it toward Miles, for the fun of watching his arachnophobic buddy flinch. But it was becoming harder to distract themselves from the seriousness of their plight. Jones felt a need to take some sort of action. "There's too much water in here for a bullet to ricochet," he told Reeves. "At least let me try it." The flight chief relented, and Jones fired 15 shots from his 9 mm pistol. The slugs barely dented the pane before sinking away.

Jones turned to Miles. "If we don't

The slugs barely dented the pane before sinking away.

circuit breaker to avoid being electrocuted. Outside, the flood surged above the windowsills; inside, it rose to their shins. Jones crouched on the desk and Miles perched on a stool, but the water soon crept to their waists. The men's hopes lifted as they watched the rescuers' vehicles pull to a halt. Then the water outside reached the top of the window, and they could see nothing—except for small fish swimming through the murk.

Jones radioed for permission to shoot out the glass. "Denied," Master Sergeant Reeves responded. "It's bulletproof. A ricochet could kill you."

By now, the water inside the shack was just a few feet from the ceiling. The two men struggled to stay calm.

make it," he said, "I want you to know I love you, brother."

"Shut up, bro," Miles answered. "You know I love you too."

AFTER A FIREFIGHTER severed the padlock with a bolt cutter, the vehicles splashed across a waterlogged highway and drove downhill toward the second gate, which barely rose above the flood. Spain swam to it, clambered over the barbed wire, and plunged underwater to slice through the lock. He and Airman First Class Cody Watson then swam to the guard shack, whose gently curved roof was its only visible feature. They dove again and again, feeling along the walls for



"I can't believe we survived," says Miles (right) with Jones beside the renovated shack.

a way in, but the effort was futile.

The firefighters—some of them Air Force, others Japanese civilians—rigged a rope line from their truck to the shack and began ferrying tools and rescuers along it. Soon there were seven or eight men on the roof, hacking at the foot-thick concrete with axes and sledgehammers. They worked in shifts as the rain pelted down. But the shack had been built to resist grenades, and the furious pounding left it virtually unscathed.

INSIDE, JONES and Miles were treading water, with inches of breathing room left. To keep their hands free, they'd dropped the radio. Now the only sounds in the shack were their rapid breathing, the sloshing of the flood, and the muffled blows of the rescuers' tools. Both men were praying for themselves and their families. Miles, who was raised by a single

mother, repeated silently, "Please don't do this to my mom."

Outside, a second fire truck pulled up at the gate, delivering a K-12 rotary saw—specially designed for first responders. Around the same time, Jones bumped his head against the ceiling and dislodged a gypsum tile. Pushing it aside, he discovered another two feet of space between the ceiling and the roof. Suddenly, both men were energized. Jones began tearing at the web of metal struts from which the ceiling hung. Miles, who'd worked in construction as a teenager, found the latches that held the system in place. The struts fell away, giving him and Jones precious headroom.

An instant later, they heard the saw's motor roar to life, followed by the snarl of its blade biting into concrete. The trapped airmen cheered and pounded on the underside of the roof. Within minutes, two 18-inch slits

had appeared above them, slashes of brightness piercing the gloom. The smell of exhaust filled the air, and grit sprayed their faces. Then came a grating sound, followed by silence. "Keep going!" the men yelled.

On the roof, the rescuers groaned: The saw had jammed. They returned to their sledgehammers, abetted this time by chisels and crowbars. Chunks of concrete showered Miles and Jones as the slits widened and merged. But the rescuers soon faced another obstacle: layers of inch-thick rebar, arranged in tight grids. They used an ax and the bolt cutter to chew through the iron rods. The water kept rising. Once again, the trapped men had only inches left.

Finally, the opening formed a rough square. A hand reached down, and Miles grasped it. Jones watched his friend rise to freedom. When his turn came, however, his shoulders wouldn't fit. As the rescuers frantically expanded the hole, a firefighter offered to escort Miles to a waiting ambulance. "I'm not leaving until

my wingman does," Miles answered.

At 7:30—an hour after he'd radioed for help—Jones emerged, gasping for breath. The rescuers whooped and hugged. At that moment, the rain stopped.

ALTHOUGH MILES and Jones were physically unharmed by their ordeal, they were changed in other ways. Both discovered that they'd lost the sense of immortality that buoys most young men. "It made me more introspective," Miles says now. "For the first time, I actually value my life." Jones suddenly awakened to the transience of time: "Before I die," he declares, "I want to do something in my career to leave an impression."

The guard shack, too, underwent a major alteration—its roof was fitted with an escape hatch. And 17 responders received Air Force commendation medals for their courage in the flood. "They were there for us all the way," says Jones. "They were willing to do whatever it took to get us out." **R**



EAT AT YOUR OWN RISK

I use Tupperware to store my garbage in the fridge for
a few weeks before throwing it away.

@CLARKEKANT

The other night, there was this huge explosion because
I tried to combine pasta with antipasta.

KRISTEN SCHAA



ONE-PAGE TRIBUTES



My Teacher Hero

Our readers salute their
most memorable educators

Miss Pemberton and the Bee

IN APRIL 1952, I was 11 years old and in the sixth grade at William Cleveland Elementary School, in Houston, Texas. My teacher was Miss Ada Pemberton. It was spelling bee time in our city—students were issued booklets of words to study in preparation for the classroom spelldowns. They would lead to a schoolwide contest and eventual qualification for the citywide bee, where school winners competed for the honor of being the spelling champion of Houston.

The day before the classroom spelling bee, my youngest brother was playing with matches and accidentally set a fire in our apartment. My mother made sleeping arrangements for all of us and called the school in the morning to inform Miss Pemberton of the accident, knowing that the class spelling bee was that day.

When I arrived at school, Miss Pemberton pulled me aside. She asked if I wanted her to postpone the spelling bee to another day because of my upset about the fire. I told her no. That day, I won the bee for my classroom.

The next week was the school spelling bee, with classroom champions competing. I won again! The citywide

spelling bee was one month away.

Every Sunday afternoon, Miss Pemberton would pick me up, and we would go to her residence, where she would help me practice by calling out spelling words. After a couple of hours, Miss Pemberton would take me to Rettig's ice cream parlor, where we would enjoy a hot fudge sundae, an indulgence I'd never had. We practiced every weekend until the citywide spelling bee with all the school champions from the Houston Independent School District.

I did not win the citywide bee, but I still felt proud to have participated. I also felt grateful that I had such a caring teacher in elementary school.

DARLENE RABE, *Houston, Texas*



Pauline Jambard Became My Family

I WAS NINE WHEN I arrived at the Children's Home in Nashua, New Hampshire, in 1965. I failed third grade that year, barely made it through a second time, and had squeaked through fourth grade by the time I reached Pauline Jambard's fifth-grade class at Charlotte Avenue Elementary School.

program, I started reading the classroom's set of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. I couldn't find enough to read, and I started to really like school.

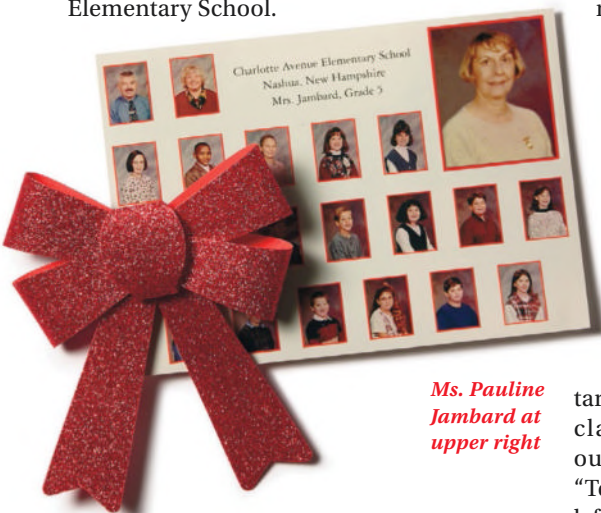
That December, the children's home threw a Christmas party for family and community members. My brother and I had no family to invite. I still remember looking up and seeing Ms. Jambard walk through the front doors of the children's home and realizing she was there to see me. That was the best Christmas of my life.

After I graduated from Ms. Jambard's class in 1969, my brother and I moved, and I lost all touch with my teacher. In 1983, I was on a business trip and had to drive through Nashua. I took a chance and dropped by Charlotte Avenue Elementary. I was walking toward her classroom when she came out in the hallway and said, "Terry!" It was as if I had never left. I was in seventh heaven on

my flight home.

We have stayed in touch, and I call Pauline at least once a year. Because of the confidence she instilled in me, I went on to have a successful career in engineering and law enforcement. I don't know if Pauline realizes how much she helped me, but I'll never forget her kindness and faith in me.

TERRY FALLON, Belmont, Arizona



Ms. Pauline Jambard at upper right

I was convinced I wasn't "smart" like the other kids, and I hoped I could make it through fifth grade. Ms. Jambard took an instant liking to me. Of all the subjects in school, reading was my favorite. She would tell me, "Terry, you keep reading. If you can understand what you're reading, you'll be smarter than most kids." After I read all the books in our

Mr. Bachmann Set Me on the Right Path

MY WOOD-SHOP teacher, Mr. August J. Bachmann, was the most influential teacher I ever had.

I had gotten into trouble in his class: Another student had pushed me into a wood lathe, and I became enraged and began to hit him. Mr. Bachmann stopped the fight, but instead of sending me to the office, he sat me down and asked a simple question: "Penna, why are you wasting your life? Why aren't you going to college?"

I didn't know anything about colleges or scholarships. No one had ever considered that a fatherless boy from the poorest neighborhood had a future. That day, instead of rushing off for lunch, he stayed and explained possible education options to me. At the end of our talk, he sent me to see a secretary who had a child at a state college. This was in 1962 at Emerson High School in Union City, New Jersey.

Well, 53 years have passed, and what have I done with the knowledge he gave me? I gained a PhD from Fordham University when I was only 29. I taught English and social studies and then moved up the chain of command from teacher to principal.

I've sat on the board for Magnet



**Robert Penna
(above) credits
Mr. Bachmann
for his success.**

Schools of America and represented that organization at the United Nations. I've won a number of prestigious educational awards. But where

would I be if a truly caring teacher had not taken the time out of his lunch period to speak to me? It was without question only his confidence in me that propelled me forward.

I have repaid his kindness hundreds of times by encouraging misguided youngsters to aim higher. If I have saved any children, it is because of him. If I have been a successful educator, it is because I had a great role model in Mr. Bachmann. **R**

ROBERT PENNA, *Franklin Lakes, New Jersey*

LIKE THIS SERIES?

We're happy to do it again. Send your stories about people who have made a difference in your life to rd.com/tributes. They may be teachers, neighbors, nurses, or clergy. Your stories could be worth \$.



I hadn't been born yet
when my father killed her.
But she's alive in my mind.

Grace

Was Her Name

BY LORENZO CARCATERRA

I HAVE NEVER MET GRACE MONTE. But not a day goes by when I don't think about her and what her life was like, her few happy moments along with her many difficult ones. I've always wondered about the sound of her voice and the kind of life she had once imagined having before she married my father. Her actual life was short and troubled, stuck on a dead-end path with a deadbeat man, with a child to raise and the threat of physical violence a constant presence.



In late October 1946, Grace was 24, and my father, Mario Carcaterra, was 29 and already set in his troubled ways. Their daughter, Phyllis, was six. Grace and my father were separated for the third or fourth time—their few friends couldn't keep track of the on-again, off-again marriage. Grace had taken a small room in a third-rate hotel less than one mile from the cramped New York City apartment they'd shared. She was weary of the unpaid bills, angry outbursts, and painful blows that were inflicted on her and then followed by tearful apologies and pleas for forgiveness. She

could no longer tolerate the affairs my father carried on with a string of women—some of them her friends—and the near-daily interference from her mother-in-law, a domineering figure with a hypnotic hold over her son.

Grace opened the hotel-room door after my father's second knock. She stood there in a slip, her dark hair covering one side of her face. He barged in and began the routine that she was all too familiar with: He spoke of a new job coming through, a new place to live, a better life for them. His words had worked in the past but not on this cold fall morning. Years of lies, abuse, and frustration weighed on Grace, and she wanted so much to

be free of them. She lashed out at my father, telling him their marriage was over, the love she'd once felt for him had dissipated, and this time their separation was final.

Then Grace said she was in love with another man.

The short leash that barely held my father's temper in check snapped. He tossed her on the bed. They struggled, Grace scratching, kicking, and clawing at him, but my father was much too strong a man. Straddling her thin body, he grabbed a pillow. He saw the fear in his wife's eyes, pushed the pillow against her face, and held it there,

his hands and arms keeping it tight.

Within several minutes that must have felt like hours, my father, his body drenched in sweat, removed the pillow and stared down at the woman he loved.

Grace Monte was dead.

My father was no longer a wayward husband and a gambler. He was no longer a man dominated by his mother. My father was a murderer.

“
***My mother
shared with
me the dark
secret she
carried in her
heart.***”

I WAS 14 YEARS OLD in 1969 when I heard the name Grace Monte. I was in Italy, visiting relatives on Ischia, an island off the coast of Naples. It was there on a beautiful beach in the middle of a sun-soaked

morning, the two of us walking along the shore, that my mother shared with me the dark secret she carried in her heart. She was concerned that I was spending too much time in my father's company and that of his friends. She dreaded the possibility that I would become who he was, a man she lived with and feared. She felt that this spot, far from our Manhattan neighborhood, was the safest place to tell me the truth about my father.

In short order, I learned he had confessed to the crime and was convicted of second-degree murder. He served nearly eight years in prison. Shortly after his release, he married my mother in an arrangement brokered by their families. She was a widow with a son—my half brother, Anthony. She knew that my father had been in prison but claimed to have not known about the murder until the first night of their honeymoon.

I have no choice but to believe her, to be convinced that even in her loneliness, in her desire to offer a better life for her son, she would not have married a wife killer. She said that she felt numb when he told her of the homicide in a manner as relaxed as if he were ordering a late-night meal. From that moment, she knew she had made the gravest mistake of her life.

I spent the rest of the day alone and in stunned silence. I sat on that beach until well into nightfall. I had thought I knew my father as well as any son my age could. But after that day, I

would never think of him in the same way again.

I had, to that point, not been close to my mother. At best, she and I had had a frosty relationship. I couldn't understand why she harbored such anger toward me. She seemed to resent the fact that I resembled my father. A deeply religious woman, she had few friends, detested my father's family, and never learned to speak English. Yet she was dependent on an undependable man for all her needs.

As I grew older, I came to understand her anger. She had made a horrific choice and was a prisoner in a loveless marriage for 34 years, not to be freed until my father's death from cancer in 1988. She then moved back to Italy, where she lived, a shell of a once-vibrant woman, until her death in 2004. We spoke regularly during that time, and I sent her money whenever I could. But our relationship had been poisoned from birth.

YEARS PASSED before I spoke to my father about the murder. But my knowing about it altered our close bond. I no longer felt at ease in his company, and I looked for excuses not to spend time with him. Our laughter-filled days at the racetrack and nights cheering on fighters at the Garden became distant memories. Instead, I devoted the bulk of my free time to finding out what I could about the woman he had killed and the child he'd left behind.

My father's family shut the door to any questions I had about Grace. To them, her murder was a shame and a horror that they did not want to relive. Over the years, a few pieces of the stained puzzle of my father's past slipped out. Once, at a relative's house, I spotted a copy of a true-crime magazine from the 1940s. The cover story was about my father and Grace, with a headline that blared "No Other Man Could Have Her." And there was the photo that fell out of a family album. I didn't have to be told whose picture it was; all I needed to see was the reaction of the other people at the table, frantically hiding it. But I had seen enough. She was as beautiful as I'd imagined her to be, her eyes filled with passion and with a smile as bright as any light.

I did meet my half sister once at a wedding reception I attended with my father. I was ten, and she was 24. We were introduced by a cousin who told me she was a family friend, but as drinks were poured, lips became looser. An old woman from the neighborhood pulled me aside, smiled, pointed at her, and said, "That young girl is your sister. You're not supposed to know about her, and that's wrong. But you should know—a brother deserves to know." I was struck by

how much she resembled my father.

My most lingering memory of my half sister occurred at the end of the evening. She and I were sitting in the backseat of a crowded car. With one arm around my shoulders, she leaned down and kissed me gently on the top of my head. "I hope we see each other again," she whispered.

After the car pulled to a stop, she got out and walked away. I wanted to jump out and hug her. I felt a connection to her, a bond. I was later told by relatives that she was prohibited by law from having anything to do with her father or his family. But she and my father secretly

kept in contact and, I came to learn, met once or twice a year. Later still, I found out that she had five children and had moved numerous times. Although I want answers, my half sister has wanted peace. At the very least, I feel I owe her that much.

I WAS A MARRIED MAN with two children of my own by the time I finally spoke to my father about Grace Monte. Although I had tried numerous times to broach the subject, I could never muster the words or the courage. In 1988, he was dying of cancer, in the late stages of a disease that had sapped him of his strength and forced him to direct his

“
*Grace and I
are linked by
murder and
blood, and
we always
will be.*”

anger at his illness instead of at others. He knew that I had been told about his crime, and he wanted to tell me that while he had loved my mother in his own way, Grace Monte was his one true love.

His powerful sense of loss, the emptiness and loneliness he had endured in silence for all those years since that horrible day in the hotel room in 1946—that was his real punishment. “I ask myself one question every day,” my father said. “The same question. Why? Why? Why did I kill her? Why?” He had mourned for Grace every day since her death. My father was a tortured man, sentenced to live and die under the weight of an unforgivable crime.

Grace Monte is as much a part of my life as she was a part of my father's. Even now, I try to learn as much about her as I can. I know she loved to dance

and heard Frank Sinatra sing live at the Rustic Cabin in New Jersey. She enjoyed going to the movies and, like my father, preferred James Cagney to Humphrey Bogart. She had a sharp sense of humor and a quick temper, and she doted on her only child. She didn't care much for religion or neighborhood gossip. She liked reading, and despite her lack of money, she always looked stylish.

Grace Monte is my constant shadow, a woman never known but always seen, a woman I will never be able to forget. I have come to think of her in the same way that one thinks of an old friend long gone or a first love. We are linked—Grace and I—and we always will be. It is a link forged by murder and blood, but it exists, and nothing can sever it.

Not now.

Not ever.

R



THE ORIGINAL GOOGLE

The New York Public Library uncovered a trove of questions posed to librarians from the 1940s to the '80s. Some of the most puzzling:


- Is it possible to keep an octopus in a private home?
- Are Plato, Aristotle, and Socrates the same person?
- Can NYPL recommend a good forger?
- Does the Bible have a copyright?
- What does it mean if you dream of being chased by an elephant?

Source: gothamist.com

INNOVATION



*Sumner cycles
with his
prosthetic leg
visible so other
amputees can
relate.*



Amputees are often tortured by phantom pain from missing limbs. While scientists puzzle over the condition, Stephen Sumner delivers a simple treatment that works.

A MAN, A MIRROR, A CURE

BY SRINATH PERUR FROM MOSAIC

ONE JUNE EVENING in 2004, Stephen Sumner was riding a scooter down a quiet road in Tuscany when a motorist crashed into him and sent him flying. He broke his collarbone and ribs, and his arm and leg were crushed. The doctors saved his arm, but his left leg had to be amputated above the knee. As Sumner, now 54, recuperated, he knew he'd lost the limb: He received gruesome visual reminders when the stump was cleaned. Yet still, he felt the leg. It began in his dreams.

In a particularly vivid one, he was lying on his back on a wooden cart, his left leg visible till just above the knee. The rest of the leg was hanging through a gap in the slats, swinging in time to the lurching of the cart.

During his third week in the hospital, Sumner began to feel pain, though *pain* turns out to be a wholly inadequate word for what he describes: excruciatingly clenched toes, jolts that he likens to being shocked by a cattle prod, writhing so violent that his head banged against the sides of the hospital bed. A doctor said his body was adjusting and the aches would go away.

Back in his native Canada, Sumner underwent physiotherapy and began wearing a prosthetic leg. The pain returned at intervals. "Everything was good," he says. "But my leg that's not there was killing me."

THE SENSATION of a missing limb is felt by nearly everyone who's had a limb removed. Somewhere from 50 percent to 80 percent of all amputees complain of phantom limb pain. Doctors used to think the pain was from damaged nerves near the stump. They tried to shorten the stump, which sometimes gave relief but seldom for long. Then, in the early 1990s, neuroscientist V. S. Ramachandran, PhD, and colleagues at the University of California, San Diego, conducted simple

experiments that changed the understanding of phantom limbs. When the researchers stroked the left side of the face of a young man who had recently lost his left arm, he felt sensations not only on his face but also on his phantom hand.

Scientists knew that the brain contains a virtual map of the body corresponding to sensory inputs from different parts. The face's representation on this map is adjacent to the hand's. Could the young man's phantom twinges be the result of sensory inputs from his face "invading" the brain region that mapped to his missing hand?

Brain imaging confirmed this. Other researchers found that these rewired inputs might activate neural pain pathways for the missing hand. Or when signals sent to move the missing hand didn't lead to any visual or sensory confirmation of the movement, this dissonance was perceived as pain.

Ramachandran and his group wondered if "seeing" the phantom limb move might help. They built a mirror box—a simple contraption that hid the stump while allowing a reflection of the intact limb to be superimposed over the phantom limb. If the amputee moved the intact and phantom limbs in sync, the brain could "see" the phantom limb move. The first amputee to try it felt immediate relief. Other users also found they could manage phantom pain.

SUMNER TRIED to will his pain away: "Optimism. Mind over matter. I thought I could beat it." But it kept getting worse. "I tried to drink it to death, which was costly and messy in every sense, plus totally ineffective."

In 2008, Sumner was working as a property manager in Baja California, Mexico, when he had a particularly agonizing bout of pain. Looking online for treatments, he decided to try mirror therapy. He drove two and a half hours to the nearest Home Depot to buy a mirror. He tried it in the parking lot. In five minutes, the pain was gone.

Sumner used the mirror for two weeks, then stopped because the pain had not returned. About a year and a half later, the pain came back. This time, he used the treatment for a full five weeks. He hasn't had phantom pain for more than four years.

"It's gone now," he says. "It's gone because I treated myself with a mirror."

In the fall of 2010, it struck Sumner that mirror therapy might be his calling. He'd go where there were amputees in pain and teach them how to use a mirror. Cambodia was his first destination because it had an inordinately high number of amputees, and it was small and flat, which was important because Sumner was planning to bicycle with his mirrors.

And so, on the first day of 2014, we meet at the entrance to the run-down Paris Hotel in the city of Battambang. The Battambang province of northwest Cambodia is one of the most heavily mined regions in one of the most heavily mined countries in the world.

Sumner grins as he walks toward me with his hand outstretched. He's a big, strong man who might pass as Steven Seagal if he had darker hair and was capable of a sterner manner.

His prosthetic knee is visible below the hem of his shorts, without the covering that makes prostheses look like natural legs. This stands out even in a country with so many amputees. It's partly by design: The success of his work depends on other "amps"—as he affectionately calls them—accepting him as one of their own. Cycling, too, is part of earning trust: "It impresses people that I roll up on a bicycle."

The Red Cross center at Battambang fits prostheses and conducts rehab for free. When Sumner visited, the manager told him none of its amputees had phantom pain. According to Sumner, that's a common response: "Nobody wants to be thought crazy."

Sumner asked to speak to the amputees. Through a translator, he told them about his accident and how he had cured himself. "How many of you have phantom limb pain?" he

“
**He started
mirror therapy
in the parking
lot, and in five
minutes, the
pain was gone.**
”



The specially designed mirrors are cheap, light, and tough to break.

asked. Thirty-seven out of 44 people raised their hands.

Sumner conducted a workshop for the center's therapists. He left behind mirrors for amps to keep using. In two trips to Cambodia, Sumner has distributed around 600 mirrors of his own design, made for him in Phnom Penh.

ONE MORNING, a volunteer drives us to Ratanak Mondol, a community populated entirely by amputees and their families. We pass signs marking areas where mines have been cleared and others with grisly warnings of the consequences of playing with a mine. The Cambodian and Vietnamese armies and the Khmer Rouge are estimated among them to have laid around ten million mines

in the country. Only around half have been recovered. Land mines and unexploded ordnance killed about 20,000 people and injured 44,000 more from 1979 to 2011 in Cambodia.

Despite public information drives and de-mining programs, farmers still step on mines in the fields. In Ratanak Mondol, a tractor detonated an antitank mine in 2012, killing seven members of a family.

Each family here has a patch of land to farm and a bamboo-and-wood stilt house. From beneath one house, four children ages four to six spill out into the yard. The eldest scissoring a bicycle perilously round the house, with a screeching younger sibling on the rear saddle. A bright heap of corn cobs dries in the sun. The children's grandfather, in his 50s, is shoveling. Only when he

comes closer does it become evident that one of his legs is prosthetic.

The community's schoolteacher is a woman around 30. Her class has 16 children from ages three to six. One of the teacher's legs is prosthetic, and she learns from Sumner how to use a mirror.

When he teaches mirror therapy, Sumner points to his head: "You have a commander here that controls the body." Many of the people he treats have been soldiers; they are familiar with talk of commanders and maps. "The commander has a map of the whole body. When the map doesn't match the body, the commander panics and you feel pain. This mirror tricks the commander into thinking the leg still exists, so the pain goes away."

Not everyone is convinced. Tamar Makin, an associate professor at the University of Oxford in England, published a paper in 2013 that questioned the neurological processes behind mirror therapy. She believes that the relief many amputees feel is probably because of the placebo effect. While several controlled trials of mirror therapy have shown it works better than a placebo, a 2011 meta-analysis found some studies to be of poor quality and could not reach a definite conclusion.

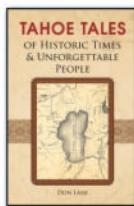
"Patients are complicated, and nothing works for everybody," says Eric Altschuler, MD, of Temple University School of Medicine and a collaborator of Ramachandran's. In his

experience, there is more than one kind of phantom pain, a distinction often not taken into account in trials. Even so, Altschuler adds, "the mirror is the only effective treatment."

WHATEVER THE science, there's something marvelously loopy about a one-legged man on a bicycle riding into villages with a bunch of mirrors. I set out with Sumner early one morning after a cup of thick, strong coffee sweetened with condensed milk.

We ride to a rehabilitation workshop run almost entirely by amputees, who make wheelchairs, crutches, walkers, and prostheses. Seven or eight people whom Sumner treated on his previous visit have gathered. "For how many of you did the pain disappear?" he asks. Almost all present raise their hands, and there's clapping.

UPDATE: *Today, Stephen Sumner still works to raise money so he can bring mirror therapy to regions with large populations of amputees. Shortly after this trip to Cambodia, he spent time in Laos; he hopes to raise enough funds to visit Myanmar, Crimea, and Ukraine soon. Sumner's work with the Red Cross in Southeast Asia has influenced therapists to begin using mirrors to help treat the wounded in Gaza and Syria. To learn more about Sumner's mission, visit meandmymirror.org.* **R**



Tahoe Tales of Historic Times & Unforgettable People

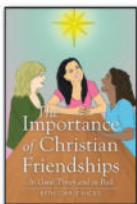
of Historic Times & Unforgettable People

Don Lane

www.xlibris.com

\$34.99 hc | \$23.99 sc | \$9.99 eb

A unique collection of stories about the early days around Lake Tahoe and the Sierras, with tales about those remarkable pioneer men and women that were inspiring, along with off-beat stories about other historic pioneers who were unforgettable characters.



The Importance of Christian Friendships

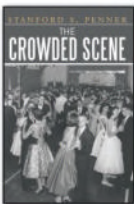
In Good Times and in Bad

Beth Gable Hicks

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\$22.99 hc | \$15.99 sc | \$5.99 eb

This book explores how Christian friendships are different, or at least should be different; and how readers can reach out to others in that friendship. We need never be alone, especially when Christ is at the center of our relationships.



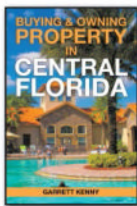
The Crowded Scene

Stanford S. Penner

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Planet Earth is obscenely overcrowded. A group of intelligent people execute a near total departure from the planet. Only an "Adam" and an "Eve" are left behind to begin repopulating the deserted world to a rationally defensible level.



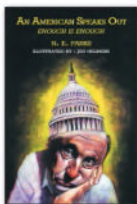
Buying & Owning Property in Central Florida

Garrett Kenny

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This insightful book takes you through the entire buying process in Florida—from selecting the right Orlando area, to property selection, to financing, showing you what to watch out for each step of the way and how to get ahead.



An American Speaks Out

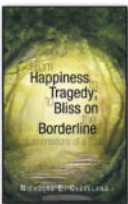
Enough Is Enough

N. E. Parks

www.authorhouse.com

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In a timely discussion, book provides common sense ideas on how to put government back in the hands of the people who have had their lives turned upside down with insecurity in the future not seen since the Great Depression.



From Happiness to Tragedy; To Bliss on the Borderline

(Lamentations of a Fool)

Nicholas E. Cleveland

www.authorhouse.com

\$19.95 sc | \$3.99 eb

Nicholas E. Cleveland describes his roller coaster ride through two marriages — one with a wife who he was convinced had borderline personality disorder. Join him on a life-changing journey "From Happiness to Tragedy; To Bliss on the Borderline."

WHO ? KNEW

13 Things a Handyman Won't Tell You

BY MICHELLE CROUCH

1 If your handyman says he can “do it all,” that’s a red flag. I’ve seen a guy who advertises on his truck that he mows grass, paints, does renovations, and builds houses. That’s not the guy you want to hire. Actually, a sure sign that you can trust me is if I tell you I’m *not* the best person to do a particular job and give you the name of someone else.

2 Before you call me about your clogged sink or shower drain, try a plunger or a Zip-It drain-cleaning tool. Neither requires you to take anything apart, and both often do the trick in just a minute or two.

3 Offering me water or some cookies is great, but if you really want

to show me hospitality, let me know that it’s OK for me to use your bathroom. It’s always a pain to have to jump into my truck and drive somewhere to answer nature’s call.

4 The advantage of hiring a handyman from a national franchise is that he’s usually screened and trained and has a boss you can complain to if there’s a problem. But you may also end up with an employee who doesn’t care as much about quality, and you almost always will pay a higher price. ➔



5 Sometimes I still have to look up how to do something before I do a job (YouTube is the best!). A good handyman stays up to date on new products and trends and is always open to learning something.

6 Houses don't take care of themselves. It's on you to inspect yours at least once a year: Do you need to caulk around your windows and doors? Do you have any rotted wood? Are any shingles loose? It's a lot less expensive to hire me to address those things than to replace them after years of neglected maintenance.

7 If I'm any good, I really don't need to advertise, because I get plenty of work through word of mouth. When I started my business, I put a magnet on my truck with my phone number. After about six months, I had to take it off because I was getting too many calls.

8 I may give you a different price than the one I gave someone else for the same job. Why? Some of us charge more when we're really busy. Or if I go into a house and it's positively filthy, I'll raise the price because I don't want to work there.

9 Before you throw something out, ask whether I can repair it. I've fixed broken doors and window frames, furniture, toys, and even a

medical bed. One time, my neighbor put his lawn mower out on the curb and headed to the store for a new one. I rescued and fixed it before he got home with the replacement.

10 On a budget? Ask if there is any way you can help out in exchange for a lower price. Even if you're not handy, I may reduce my rate on a big job if you can haul materials for me or if you are willing to clean up the work mess at the end of each day.

11 If a handyman asks to be paid in cash, he probably doesn't have a business bank account, or he might not be claiming all his income on his taxes. If I don't have the integrity to pay my taxes, do you think I'll have the integrity to do good work when you're not looking?

12 Sure, I would be happy to fix your sticky door or tighten that faucet now that I'm here. But don't act surprised when I charge you for it. We make a big part of our living from those "while you're here" jobs.

13 Please. Do. Something. With. The. Dog. And I don't mean lock him in the bedroom, where he'll bark all day while you're gone. See if someone can keep him for the day. **R**

Sources: Dave Kassab, owner of DK Handyman in West Chester, Pennsylvania; Dan Perry, a handyman in Reno, Nevada, who runs handymanstartup.com; Jason George, owner of Handyman Professionals in the Detroit, Michigan, area; Kevin Lind, owner of Lind's Handyman Service in Northport, Alabama

If you bought certain joint health products containing glucosamine, you could get money from a class action settlement.

Includes Move Free, Move Free Advanced, Pain Free, Lubriflex, Great American Nutrition, Metaform, Muscle Tribe, Victory, Schiff, Kirkland, Member's Mark and Spring Valley brand products

A Settlement has been reached in class action lawsuits against Schiff Nutrition International, Inc., Schiff Nutrition Group, Inc., Reckitt Benckiser LLC and their affiliates (Schiff) regarding their joint health products. The lawsuits claim that the labeling and packaging of these joint health products contain false, deceptive and misleading statements and do not warn consumers about the potentially harmful side effects. Schiff denies all of the claims in the lawsuits and any wrongdoing. The Court has not decided who is right.

WHO IS INCLUDED? You are included in the Settlement Class if you are a resident of the United States who purchased for personal use, and not for resale or distribution, a Move Free, Move Free Advanced, Pain Free, Lubriflex, Great American Nutrition, Metaform, Muscle Tribe, Victory, Schiff, Kirkland, Member's Mark or Spring Valley brand joint health product between January 1, 2005 and May 27, 2015. A complete list of all joint health products included in the Settlement ("Covered Products") is available at www.SchiffGlucosamineSettlement.com or by writing to Schiff Nutrition International Consumer Settlement Administration, P.O. Box 43352, Providence, RI 02940-3352.

WHAT DOES THE SETTLEMENT PROVIDE? Schiff has agreed to a Settlement Fund of \$6,510,000 to pay all costs associated with this Settlement. Settlement Class Members who submit a timely and valid Claim Form with proof of purchase, such as a cash register receipt, the box or bottles of a Covered Product containing a readable UPC code and lot number, or documentation showing purchase of the Covered Product and the date and location of that purchase, may claim \$10 per bottle of Covered Product for up to five bottles (up to \$50 total). Settlement Class Members who submit a timely and valid Claim Form *without* proof of purchase may claim \$3 per bottle of a Covered Product for up to four bottles (up to \$12 total). If the total dollar value of valid Claim Forms plus Notice and Administrative Costs, Attorneys' Fees Award and Incentive Awards exceeds \$6,510,000, the payment to each Settlement Class Member who submitted a valid Claim Form will be proportionately reduced until the total amount paid under the Settlement equals \$6,510,000. If the total dollar value of valid Claim Forms plus Notice and Administrative Costs, Attorneys' Fees Award and Incentive Awards is less than \$6,510,000, the payment to each Settlement Class Member who submitted a valid Claim Form *with* proof of purchase will increase (up to triple the amount of the original claim). If, after increasing these payments, the total payment amount is still less than \$6,510,000, the payment to each Settlement Class Member who submitted a valid Claim Form *without* proof of purchase will increase (up to double the amount of the original claim). If, after increasing the payment for all valid claims, the total payment amount is still less than \$6,510,000, the balance will be distributed on a *pro rata* basis (divided proportionately among the number of Claim Forms submitted and the dollar amount of those claims) to all Settlement Class Members who submitted a timely and valid Claim Form. In addition to payments, Schiff has agreed to certain changes to the marketing and packaging for the Covered Products.

HOW DO YOU GET A PAYMENT? You must submit a timely and valid Claim Form by **September 24, 2015**. Complete and submit your Claim Form online at www.SchiffGlucosamineSettlement.com, download a Claim Form from the website or get one by calling 1-877-219-9780, or by writing to Schiff Nutrition International Consumer Settlement Administration, P.O. Box 43352, Providence, RI 02940-3352.

YOUR OTHER OPTIONS? If you do nothing, your rights will be affected and you will not get a settlement payment. If you do not want to be legally bound by the Settlement, you must exclude yourself from it. The deadline to exclude yourself is **September 24, 2015**. Unless you exclude yourself, you will not be able to sue or continue to sue Schiff for any claim resolved by this Settlement or released in the Second Amended Settlement Agreement and General Release. If you exclude yourself, you cannot get a payment from the Settlement. If you stay in the Settlement (*i.e.*, don't exclude yourself), you may object to it by **September 24, 2015**. More information is in the detailed notice and Second Amended Settlement Agreement and General Release available at www.SchiffGlucosamineSettlement.com or by writing to Schiff Nutrition International Consumer Settlement Administration, P.O. Box 43352, Providence, RI 02940-3352.

THE COURT'S FAIRNESS HEARING. The U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, located at the Edward J. Schwartz Federal Courthouse, 221 W. Broadway, San Diego, California 92101 will hold a hearing in this case (*Lerma v. Schiff Nutrition International, Inc., et al.*, No. 3:11-cv-01056-CAB-MDD), on October 30, 2015 at 10 a.m. to consider whether to approve: (1) the proposed Settlement; (2) Settlement Class Counsel's request for attorneys' fees of up to 33% of the \$6,510,000 Settlement Fund as well as costs; and (3) a payment of up to \$10,000 from the Settlement Fund for the Named Plaintiffs (Luis Lerma, Nick Pearson and Muriel Jayson). You may appear at the hearing or hire an attorney, at your expense, to appear or speak for you at the hearing, but you do not have to.

WANT MORE INFORMATION? Go to the website, call or write to Schiff Nutrition International Consumer Settlement Administration, P.O. Box 43352, Providence, RI 02940-3352.



Toys That Weren't Meant to Be Toys

BY BRANDON SPECKTOR

Play-Doh was originally a wallpaper cleaner.

Joseph McVicker, head of Kutol Products Company in Cincinnati, Ohio, heard from a local teacher that students were struggling to use stiff modeling clay in the classroom. He realized Kutol's wallpaper cleaning putty made a squishy substitute and shipped some to schools in 1955. Within a year, McVicker and his uncle founded Rainbow Crafts Company to sell the newly named Play-Doh in 1.5-pound chunks of off-white. Soon

the putty was sold in primary colors, too, building it into a crafting staple.

Slinky was inspired by a battleship spring.

In 1943, naval engineer Richard James attempted to design a spring for stabilizing sensitive equipment aboard ships in rough waters. Accidentally knocking one off the shelf, he watched the spring "walk" down a stack of books and tables before standing in a coil on the floor. James shared the trick with his wife,

Betty, who scoured the dictionary for a name, settling on Slinky for the spring's sleek, sinuous gait. With a \$500 loan, the Jameses had 400 Slinkys made and in 1945 gave their first department store demo. They sold their entire supply in 90 minutes.

Frisbees started as pie plates.

The Frisbie Pie Company, founded in 1871, was known as much for its pie tins as for the tasty pastries they carried. The game of tossing empty Frisbie tins through the air quickly spread from schoolyards near the Connecticut factory to college campuses like Yale University's, until they became so synonymous with flying disks that Wham-O toys loosed its own plastic Frisbee line in 1957.

Silly Putty was meant to be a rubber substitute.

In the early 1940s, Japan's invasion of rubber-producing Asian countries sent American scientists scrambling to devise a replacement. Engineer James Wright's combination of boric acid and silicone oil proved too weak as a rubber but could bounce higher and stretch farther. Wright sent samples to scientists around the world in hopes that one could find a practical use for his "nutty putty." None could. But in 1949, marketing consultant Peter Hodgson did. He bought production rights, renamed it Silly Putty, and stretched this wartime curio into toy history.



Thanks to BetterWOMAN, I'm winning the battle for **Bladder Control.**



Frequent nighttime trips to the bathroom, embarrassing leaks and the inconvenience of constantly searching for rest rooms in public – for years, I struggled with bladder control problems. After trying expensive medications with horrible side effects, ineffective exercises and undignified pads and diapers, I was ready to resign myself to a life of bladder leaks, isolation and depression. But then I tried **BetterWOMAN**.

When I first saw the ad for BetterWOMAN, I was skeptical. So many products claim they can set you free from leaks, frequency and worry, only to deliver disappointment. When I finally tried BetterWOMAN, I found that it actually works! It changed my life. Even my friends have noticed that I'm a new person. And because it's all natural, I can enjoy the results without the worry of dangerous side effects. Thanks to BetterWOMAN, I finally fought bladder control problems and I won!



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LOOK

TWICE ...

JAN VERMEER/MINDEN PICTURES/AP PHOTO



... What do you see?

A) Close-up of a golf ball,

B) ripples in a pool, or

C) a big, cold reason to turn your boat around?

Answer: C. Like all icebergs, this dimpled slab of Antarctic ice—once a piece of a glacier—is now unmoored and drifting like a frozen battleship. With up to 90 percent of an iceberg's mass hidden underwater, it's best to steer clear. One of the largest ever reported was more than 12,000 square miles—a mobile island larger than Belgium.

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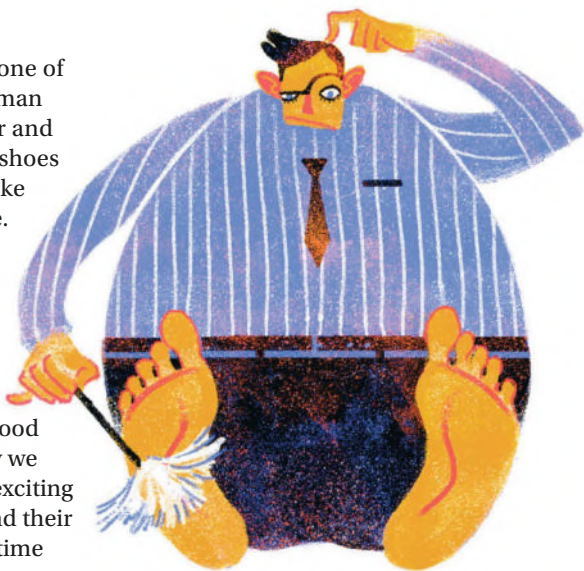
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Why Can't You Tickle Yourself?

BY DAVID ROBSON FROM BBC.COM FUTURE

IF YOU WANT to probe one of the great mysteries of the human mind, all you need is a duster and your feet. Sit back, take your shoes and socks off, and gently stroke the feathers against your sole. Now ask a friend to do the same for you. If you are like most people, you will be left stone-faced by one but convulsed in ticklish agony by the other. Why?

Once the domain of childhood curiosity, the question of why we can't tickle ourselves is now exciting neuroscientists. To understand their interest, consider this: Every time your body moves, it creates sensations that could potentially confuse you in all kinds of ways. Just imagine the chaos if every time one of your hands brushed your leg, you assumed that someone was fondling or attacking you. Being able to distinguish between your movement and the actions of others is therefore a central part of our sense of self and agency, aspects of the psyche that even the



smartest robots can't replicate—yet.

Sarah-Jayne Blakemore, of University College London, was one of the first to investigate the way the brain makes these lightning-fast decisions about the self and others. She scanned subjects' brains as her colleagues tickled the palms of their hands and as the participants attempted to do so themselves. From

the resulting brain activity, Blakemore concluded that whenever we move our limbs, the brain's cerebellum produces precise predictions of the body's movements and then sends a second shadow signal that damps down activity in the somatosensory cortex (where tactile feelings are processed). The result is that when we tickle ourselves, we don't feel the sensations with the same intensity as we would if they had come from someone else, and so we remain calm.

Blakemore suspected there could be ways to fool the process and allow people to tickle themselves. So she designed a machine that allowed her subjects to move a stick that gently stroked a piece of foam over their palm, sometimes instantaneously and at other times with a delay of up to 200 milliseconds. It turned out that the greater the delay, the more ticklish the foam felt, perhaps because the cerebellum's predictions no longer matched what the person was actually feeling.

Many others have since tried to find ways to trick the brain into tickling itself. For instance, controlling someone's foot movements with magnetic brain stimulation, so that the hand tickles the foot against the person's will, seems to do the trick.

But other experiments have produced puzzling results. One study tried to give subjects an out-of-body experience before tickling them, by fitting them with video goggles that let them see from the eyes of the experimenter and by synchronizing their movements. Even with the subjects confused about which body

they inhabited, they were largely unmoved when they pressed a button that tickled both bodies simultaneously. Another experiment, in which expert lucid dreamers tried to tickle themselves in their sleep, also failed.

It may seem random, but understanding the self-tickling barrier

could answer more practical questions, like why many schizophrenics can tickle themselves or whether robots ever could. "Your inability to tickle yourself suggests neurologically based definitions of self and other," writes Robert Provine of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. "Developing a similar machine algorithm may lead to 'ticklish' robots [that can] distinguish touching from being touched and may provide a [new] construct of machine personhood." If so, a duster could soon provide a bizarre new test for artificial intelligence: Just aim for the robot's feet and see if it laughs. **R**



***The greater
the delay from
anticipation
to contact, the
more ticklish
the foam felt.***

If you purchased the muscle relaxant Skelaxin or generic metaxalone, your rights may be affected by and you could get a payment from a class action settlement.

A settlement has been reached with Mutual Pharmaceutical Company, Inc. ("Mutual") in a class action lawsuit about whether Mutual and King Pharmaceuticals, Inc. ("King") acted unlawfully to keep generic versions of Skelaxin off the market. Mutual denies all of the claims in the lawsuit, but has agreed to the settlement to avoid the cost and risk of a trial. The lawsuit is not proceeding against King.

Who's Included? The settlement includes people and entities in the U.S. or its territories who purchased, paid for or reimbursed some or all of the purchase price of Skelaxin or its AB-rated generic equivalent (metaxalone) at retail or mail order pharmacies located in AZ, AR, CA, FL, IA, KS, ME, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, NE, NV, NM, NY, NC, ND, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, VT, VA, WV, WI, or Washington, D.C., in any form, for personal or family use, or for their members, employees, insureds, participants, or beneficiaries, other than for resale, between November 4, 2005 and August 5, 2014 ("Settlement Class Members"). There are two groups included in the settlement: consumers and third party payors ("TPPs"). If you are a consumer and your insurance plan requires you to pay a flat co-payment (the same amount for Skelaxin and generic metaxalone), you are *not* included in the settlement.

What Does the Settlement Provide? A \$9 million Settlement Fund has been established by Mutual. After the deducting Plaintiffs' Class Counsel attorneys' fees and expenses and the costs of settlement notice and administration, 28% of the net the Settlement Fund will be made available to consumers and 72% will be made available to TPPs. Payments will be based on the qualifying amount of Skelaxin or generic metaxalone purchased, the amount paid for those purchases and the total amount

of purchases claimed. Consumers will receive their share of the consumer portion of the net Settlement Fund in proportion to their qualifying purchases.

How Do You Get a Payment? You must submit a claim form by **October 31, 2015**. Claims may be submitted online or downloaded for mailing at www.skelaxinsettlement.com. Claim forms and instructions are also available by calling 1-866-267-0396 or by writing to *In re Skelaxin (Metaxalone) Antitrust Litigation*, PO Box 43278, Providence, Rhode Island 02940-3278.

Your Other Options. If you are included in the settlement class and you do nothing you do nothing, your rights will be affected and you won't get a payment. If you don't want to be legally bound by the settlement, you must exclude yourself from it by **September 28, 2015**. Unless you exclude yourself, you won't be able to sue or continue to sue Mutual for any claim made in this lawsuit or released by the Settlement Agreement. If you stay in the settlement (*i.e.*, don't exclude yourself), you may object to it or ask for permission for you or your own lawyer to appear and speak at the hearing—at your own cost—but you don't have to. Objections and requests to appear are due by **September 28, 2015**. More information about these options is in the detailed notice available at www.skelaxinsettlement.com.

The Court will hold a hearing in this case (*In re Skelaxin (Metaxalone) Antitrust Litigation*, MDL No. 1:12-md-2343) on November 2, 2015 to consider whether to approve the settlement and Plaintiffs' Class Counsel attorneys' fees of up to 33 1/3% of the Settlement Fund, plus reasonable costs and expenses. If approved, these fees, costs and expenses will be paid from the Settlement Fund before making payments to Settlement Class Members.

Incredible Crime Scene Professions

BY JENNIFER M. WOOD FROM *MENTAL FLOSS*



1 Forensic Botanist

In 1932, Bruno Hauptmann propped a homemade ladder against Charles Lindbergh's house, climbed up to one of the bedroom windows, and snatched the aviator's 20-month-old son. When Hauptmann was brought to court, forensic botany helped lock him away. Arthur Koehler, a wood technologist, discovered that one of the ladder rails had formerly been part of a floor. He later matched the tree rings on that ladder with a missing floorboard in Hauptmann's attic. Since then, botanists have used pollen (which clings to clothes and hair) to link suspects to crime scenes, soil and plant samples to determine when unmarked graves were dug, and algae blooms to identify where drowning victims died. So avoid committing crimes in front of your ficus. It's a snitch.

2 Forensic Linguist

From pronunciations and misspellings to overused words,

the language patterns you demonstrate while communicating are as distinct as the sound of your voice. That makes them an important piece of evidence in a criminal investigation. Though forensic linguistics emerged in the late 1960s, it didn't become popular in the United States until the mid-1990s, when FBI linguist James Fitzgerald was hunting for the Unabomber, who had killed three people and injured two dozen by mailing homemade bombs. Fitzgerald believed publishing the bomber's "manifesto" would help catch the criminal—and it worked. Several people, including his brother and sister-in-law, recognized the writing style and called in. Soon Ted Kaczynski was in handcuffs.

3 Forensic Accountant

Some investigators carry guns, while others wield calculators. After all, when the FBI was founded in 1908, 12 of its 34 original investigators were bank examiners. Today about



15 percent of the FBI's special agents are accountants, and thousands are scattered across government agencies and police departments around the

country. Why so many number crunchers? Because most crimes revolve around one motive: money. Forensic accountants work on various cases, including money laundering, securities fraud, insurance claims, and embezzlement. They commonly search for cash in hidden accounts, once memorably exposing that O. J. Simpson—who'd claimed he was too poor to handle a civil suit in 1997—actually possessed millions. Accountants even helped throw Al Capone in the slammer. His crime? Tax evasion.

4 Forensic Astronomer

The celestial bodies (mostly the moon and sun) have had their day in court for decades. When Abraham Lincoln was a lawyer, he successfully defended a client against murder charges by establishing the position of the moon on the night of the crime (disproving the testimony of the prosecution's key witness). But most forensic astronomers work for museums, not lawyers. Some, like Donald Olson of Texas State University, help art historians determine when paintings of nature scenes were made. Comparing details in the artwork with historical weather and star data, Olson has pinned years onto

works from artists as diverse as Monet and Ansel Adams. His sleuthing even confirmed the legend that Mary Shelley was inspired to write *Frankenstein* by a moonbeam. (It was a bright gibbous, in case you were wondering.)

5 Forensic Optometrist

Diagnosing astigmatism and glaucoma is all in a day's work for an optometrist. Catching a murderer? Not so much. But when criminals forget their spectacles at the crime scene, your average eye doctor has the chance to be a hero. That's what Graham Strong did for two decades.

Now retired, Strong began working as a forensic optometrist in 1989 after investigators found glasses under the body of a murder victim. When detectives found a suspect wearing similar shades in an old mug shot, they asked Strong to confirm that they were a match. "I obtained more than 20 measurements that enabled me to conclude that the glasses found at the scene were identical to those in photographs," he says, and the evidence resulted in a first-degree murder conviction. Even the smallest shard of a broken lens can reveal someone's prescription—and identity. **R**

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Word Power

*"Come autumn's scathe—come winter's cold—
Come change—and human fate!" Elizabeth Barrett Browning writes
in "Autumn," a reminder to embrace the changes that the seasons bring.
In accord, a collection of words about change. Answers on next page.*

BY EMILY COX & HENRY RATHVON

1. ameliorate (uh-'meel-yuh-rayt) *v.*—A: make better or more tolerable. B: make worse. C: turn upside down.

2. tack ('tak) *v.*—A: switch horses. B: follow a zigzag course. C: tailor a suit.

3. ferment (fur-'mehnt) *n.*—A: state of unrest or disorderly development. B: improvement. C: evaporation.

4. synchronize ('sin-kreh-niyz) *v.*—A: cause to coincide. B: increase speed. C: move one's lips.

5. static ('sta-tik) *adj.*—A: in a frenzy. B: unchanging. C: moving through space.

6. flux ('fluhks) *n.*—A: series of failures. B: continued flow. C: rapid rise.

7. vicissitudes (vuh-'si-suh-toods) *n.*—A: exact opposites. B: minor adjustments. C: ups and downs.

8. fickle ('fi-hkuhl) *adj.*—A: beginning to decay. B: marked by a lack of constancy. C: stuck in a rut.

9. immutable (ih-'myu-tuh-buhl) *adj.*—A: in motion. B: not susceptible to change. C: becoming a monster.

10. adapt (uh-'dapt) *v.*—A: spread gradually. B: become airborne. C: make fit, usually by alteration.


11. crescendo (kreh-'shen-doh) *n.*—A: sudden narrowing. B: gradual increase. C: change in color.

12. hiatus (hiy-'ay-tuhs) *n.*—A: growth spurt. B: interruption in time or continuity. C: change of season.

13. agitate ('a-juh-tayt) *v.*—A: replace. B: break into bits. C: disturb emotionally.

14. senescent (sih-'neh-snt) *adj.*—A: getting old. B: catching fire. C: developing a fragrance.

15. incorrigible (in-'kor-uh-juh-buhl) *adj.*—A: rustproof. B: spontaneous. C: not reformable.

 To play an interactive version of Word Power on your iPad, download the Reader's Digest app.

Answers

1. ameliorate—[A] make better or more tolerable. I find that just 15 minutes of yoga daily *ameliorates* my worries.

2. tack—[B] follow a zigzag course. Deftly, the captain *tacked* through the rocky shoals of the bay.

3. ferment—[A] state of unrest or disorderly development. Henry's writer's block was followed by a creative *ferment* in his poetry.

4. synchronize—[A] cause to coincide. Before we begin the 5K race, let's *synchronize* our watches.

5. static—[B] unchanging. Alyson found the novel's characters to be a bit *static* and one-dimensional.

6. flux—[B] continued flow. It's too soon to predict the election—everything's in *flux*.

7. vicissitudes—[C] ups and downs. One thing I've learned: Life is anything but constant, so enjoy its *vicissitudes*.

8. fickle—[B] marked by a lack of constancy. Tara described her niece as “*fickle* at best” after their visit to the toy store.

9. immutable—[B] not susceptible to change. Apparently, my upstairs tenant thinks loud, thumping music is his *immutable* right.

10. adapt—[C] make fit, usually by alteration. If you want to eat vegan, I can *adapt* the recipe.

11. crescendo—[B] gradual increase. The concerto ended with an unexpected yet effective *crescendo*.

12. hiatus—[B] interruption in time or continuity. The mayoral debate was marked by an uncomfortable *hiatus* before the incumbent responded.

13. agitate—[C] disturb emotionally. If you ask me, those therapy sessions just *agitate* Karyn even more.

14. senescent—[A] getting old. The rocking chair is gorgeous, but do you really see me as *senescent*?

JUST A PHASE?

The moon is a natural symbol of change, and its shape-shifting comes in phases. As it grows from invisibility (a new moon), it is *waxing*; when between half and full, it is called *gibbous* (literally, “hump-backed”). As it shrinks again, it is *waning*; and when it approaches a sliver of a fingernail in appearance, it is called a *crescent*.

15. incorrigible—[C] not reformable. I'm afraid our new puppy is simply *incorrigible* when it comes to sleeping on the couch.

VOCABULARY RATINGS

9 & below: Ready for an upgrade

10–12: Getting ahead

13–15: Emerging anew

Humor in Uniform



"And when I press this one, they light up."

MY NEPHEW was in the bathroom shaving when the phone rang, so his four-year-old daughter, Amanda, answered. It was her father's sergeant. Hearing a child's voice, the sergeant said, "Hello. I'm your dad's boss. May I speak to him?"

Amanda turned toward the bathroom and shouted, "Dad, the president's on the phone."

JUDY NEWBERRY, Yorba Linda, California

I LEFT THE MESS TENT of our northern Iraq base, carrying a piece

of triple-chocolate fudge cheesecake. Just then, an enemy mortar exploded nearby. I hit the ground with one thing in mind—protecting my dessert! My sergeant saw me and demanded, "Soldier, where is your weapon?"

"Don't worry, Sarge," I said. "I can always get another M16. But we rarely have cheesecake."

JAY BISPING, Atchison, Kansas

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Quotable Quotes



**IF YOU CHASE
TWO RABBITS,
YOU WILL LOSE
THEM BOTH.**

**NATIVE
AMERICAN
PROVERB**

**Discipline is doing the
same thing the right
way whether anyone's
watching or not.**

MICHAEL J. FOX



Most people do not
listen with the intent to
understand; they listen with
the intent to reply.

STEPHEN R. COVEY, author

**YOU WILL NEVER BE
COMPLETELY FREE FROM
RISK IF YOU ARE FREE.**

EDWARD SNOWDEN, privacy advocate



***Being a nerd just means there
is something in the world that you
care deeply about.*** **OLIVIA MUNN, actress**

**EVERYBODY WANTS
TO SAVE THE EARTH;
NOBODY WANTS
TO HELP MOM
DO THE DISHES.**

P. J. O'ROURKE



History is merely a
list of surprises.

It can only
prepare us to
be surprised
yet again.

KURT VONNEGUT

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